



Johannes Honter, v. D. M.



R. White sculp.

Johannes Honter, v. D. M.

THE
Blessedness
OF THE
RIGHTEOUS

Opened, And further Recommended
From the Consideration of
The VANITY of this
MORTAL LIFE:

In Two Treatises, On $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{Psal. 17. 15.} \\ \text{Psal. 80. 47.} \end{array} \right.$

By J. HOWE, M.A. sometime Fellow
of Magdalen College, Oxon.

*When he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we
shall see him as he is, 1 Joh. 3. 2.*

*Ἀλλὰ τὰ κατὰ τὸ δῶκεν ἐν θεοῖς ἰδρυμένη τὴν δὲ δυνάμει
οὖσιν, καὶ τὸνδε τὸν τόπον περιπολεῖ ἐξ ἀνάγκης. Διὸ
καὶ ποιεῖται χρὴ ἐνδεῖν ἐκείσε φεύγειν ὅτι τάχιστα.
Φυγὴ δὲ ὁμοίως διὰ κατὰ τὸ δῶκεν, ὁμοίως δὲ
δικαίον, καὶ ὅσιν μετὰ φρονήσεως ἡσέδαι. Plat. in Theat.*

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To the Reader.

I Am not at all solicitous, that the World should know the history of the conception of this Treatise. If there be any thing that shall recompense the pains of such as may think fit to give themselves the trouble of perusing it, in the work it self, I should yet think it too much an undervaluing of them, if I did reckon the minuter circumstances relating thereto, fit matter for their entertainment.

Nor am I more concern'd to have it known what were the inducements to the publication of it. Earnest protestations and remonstrances of our good intentions in such undertakings, as they leave men still at liberty to believe or doubt at their pleasure, so they gain us little if they be believed. It is no easie matter, to carry one even, constant tenour of spirit through a work of time. Nor is it more easie, to pass a settled invariable judgment concerning so variable a subject; when an heart that may seem wholly framed and set for God this hour, shall look so quite like another thing the next, and change figures and postures almost as often as it doth thoughts.

And if a man should be mistaken in judging himself, it would little mend the matter, to have deceived others also into a good opinion of him.

But if he can approve himself to God in the simplicity of an honest and undeceived heart,

To the Reader.

Seneca

The peace that ensues, is a secret between God and him. They are Theater enough to one another, (as he said to his friend). 'Tis an inclosed pleasure: A joy which the stranger cannot intermeddle with.

'Tis therefore any man's concernment herein rather to satisfy himself than the world. And the world's rather to understand the design of the work than the Author; and whither it tends, rather than whereto he meant it.

And 'tis obvious enough, to what good purposes discourses of this nature may serve. This is, in the design of it, wholly practical; hath little or nothing to do with disputation. If there be any whose business it is, to promote a private, divided interest; or who place the sum of their Religion in an inconsiderable and doubtful opinion; It doth not unhallow their Altars, nor offer any affront to their Faith. It intends no quarrel to any contending, angry party. But deals upon things in the substance whereof Christians are at a professed agreement. And hath therefore the greater probability of doing good to some, without the offence of any.

'Tis indeed equally matter of complaint and wonder, that men can find so much leisure to divert from such things, wherein there is so much both of importance and pleasure, unto (what one would think should have little of temptation or allurements in it) contentious jangling. It might rather be thought, its visible fruits and tendencies should render it the most dreadful thing to every serious beholder. What Tragedies hath it wrought in the Christian Church? Into
how

To the Reader,

how weak and languishing a condition hath it brought the Religion of professed Christians? Hence have risen the intemperate preternatural heats and angers that have spent its strength and spirits, and make it look with so meagre and pale a face. We have had a greater mind to dispute than live; and to contend about what we know not, than to practise the far greater things we know; and which more directly tend to nourish and maintain the Divine Life. The Author of that ingenious sentence * (whoever he were) hath fully exprest what is the noisom product of the itch of disputing. It hath begot the ulcerous tumours, which, besides their own offensive soreness, drain the body, and turn what should nourish that, into nutriment to themselves. And its effects are not more grievous than the pleasures which it affects and pursues are uncouth and unnatural. * The rough touch of an ungente hand. That only pleases which exasperates (as the Moralist aptly expresses some like disaffection of diseased minds). Toyl and vexation is their only delight. What to a sound spirit would be a pain, is to these a pleasure.

* Præritus disputandi scabies Ecclesiæ.

* ut ulcera quædam nocturnas manus appetunt & lacrimæ exasperat: velut mala Sen de

dent, & scedam corporum scabiem delectat quicquid Non aliter dixerim his mentibus in quas voluptates ulcera eruperunt, voluptati esse laborem, vexationemque tranquillitate animi.

Which is, indeed, the triumph of the disease, that it adds unto torment reproach and mockery, and imposes upon men by so ridiculous a delusion (while they are made to take pleasure in punish-

To the Reader.

ing themselves) that even the most sober can scarce look on in a fitter posture, than with a compassionate smile. All which were yet somewhat more tolerable, if that imagined vanishing pleasure were not the whole of their gain; or if it were to be hoped, that so great a present real pain and smart, should be recompensed with as real a consequent fruit and advantage. But we know, that generally by how much any thing is more disputable, the less it is necessary or conducive to the Christian life. God hath graciously provided, that what we are to live by, should not cost us so dear. And possibly, as there is less occasion of disputing about the more momentous things of Religion; so there may be somewhat more of modesty and awe in reference to what is so confessedly venerable and sacred, (though too many are over-bold even here also) than so foolishly to trifle with such things. Therefore more commonly, where that humour prevails, men divert from those plainer things, with some slighter and superficial reverence to them, but more heartily esteeming them insipid and jejune, because they have less in them to gratifie that appetite, and betake themselves to such things about which they may more plausibly contend: and then, what pitiful trifles oftentimes take up their time and thoughts; Questions and Problems of like weighty importance (very often) with those which, the above-named Author tells us, this disease among the Greeks prompted them to trouble themselves about, as, "What number of Rowers Ulysses had? Which was written first, the Iliad or the Odysses, &c? So that (as he saith, "they

Sen. de
Brev. vit.

To the Reader.

“they spent their lives very operously doing
“nothing. Their conceits being such, that if
“they kept them to themselves, they could yield
“them no fruit; and if they published them to
“others, they should not seem thereby the more
“learned, but the more troublesome, (to this
purpose he truly speaks). And is it not to be
resented, that men should sell away the solid
strength and vital joy which a serious Soul would
find in substantial Religion, for such toys! Tea,
and not only famish themselves, but trouble the
world, and imbroid the Church with their imper-
tinencies! If a man be drawn forth to defend
an important truth against an injurious assault,
it were treacherous self-love to purchase his own
peace by declining it. Or if he did sometimes
turn his thoughts to some of our petty ques-
tions, that with many are so hotly agitated, for
recreation-sake, or to try his wit and exercise
his reason, without stirring his passions to the
disturbance of others or himself; were an in-
nocent divertisement, and the best purpose that
things of that nature are capable of serving.
But when contention becomes a mans element,
and he cannot live out of that fire, strains his
wit, and racks his invention to find matter of
quarrel; is resolved, nothing said or done by
others shall please him, only because he means
to please himself in dissenting; Disputes only
that he may dispute, and loves dissension for
it self. This is the unnatural humour that
hath so unspeakably troubled the Church, and
dispirited Religion, and filled mens Souls with
wind and vanity! Tea, with fire and fury.

To the Reader.

This hath made Christians gladiators, and the Christian World a clamorous Theater, while men have equally affected to contend, and to make ostentation of their ability so to do.

And, surely, as it is highly pleasurable to retire one self, so it is charitable to call aside others out of this noise and throng to consider silently and feed upon the known and agreed things of our Religion; which immediately lead to both the duties and delights of it.

Among which there are none more evident and undoubted, none less intangled with controversie, none more profitable and pleasant than the future blessedness of the righteous, which this discourse treats of. The last end is a matter so little disputable, that 'tis commonly thought (which is elsewhere more distinctly spoken to) not to be the object of election, and so not of deliberation consequently, but of simple intention only, because men are supposed to be generally agreed as touching that. And the knowledge and intention of it is apparently the very Soul of Religion; animates, directs, enlivens, and sweetens the whole thereof. Without which Religion were the vainest, most irrational, and most unfavoury thing in the World. For what were there left of it, but an empty unaccountable formality, a series of spiritless and meerly scenical observances and actions without a design? For whereas all mens actions else, mediate tend to the last end, but that not being in view with the most, they pitch upon other intervenient ends; which, though abstracted from the last should not be; yet they are
* actually

To the Reader.

actually to them the reason of their actions, and infuse a vigor and liveliness into them. Religion aiming immediately at the last end, that being taken away, hath no rational end or design at all. And it cannot but be an heedless business, with great solemnity, in a continued course, to do nothing but professedly trifle, or keep up a custom of certain solemn performances which have no imaginable scope or end.

And because the more clearly this our last end is understood, the more powerfully and sincerely it attracts and moves the Soul, this Treatise endeavours to give as plain and positive a share and notion of it as the Text insisted on, compared with other Scriptures, would afford to so weak an eye.

And because men are so apt to abuse themselves with the vain and self-contradicting hopes of attaining this end, without ever having their spirits framed to it, or walking in the way that leads thereto, as if they could come to Heaven by chance, or without any design or care of theirs; The proportion is endeavoured to be shewn, between that Divine likeness, in the vision and participation whereof this Blessedness consists, and the Righteousness that disposes and leads to it.

Which may it be monitory to the ungodly and prophane, who hate and scorn the likeness of God wherever they behold it. And let me tell such from (better-instructed) Pagans, "That there is nothing more like or more acceptable to God, than a man that is in the temper of his Soul truly good, who excels other men, as he is himself excelled (pardon his hyperbole) by the rest." "tat Goa.

et nihil
est quod
magis
deum
similem
habeat
quam
homo
qui est
in deo
et in
seipso

et nihil
est quod
magis
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seipso

et nihil
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seipso

* Nihil
est quod
magis
deum
similem
habeat
quam
homo
qui est
in deo
et in
seipso
bonas, &c.
Apul. de
Deo So-
cratis.

To the Reader.

* Inter bo-
nos viros
ac Deum
amicitia
est, concili-
ante virtu-
te, amicitia
am dico?
etiam necessitudo.

“That * between God and good men there is
“a friendship, by means of virtue; a friendship?
“yea, a kindred, a likeness; in as much truly as
“the good man differs from God but in time (here
“sprinkle a grain or two), being his disciple,
“imitator and very off-spring.

to allis vi... Sen. de Prov.

* Ναισα
γὰρ ὁ θεὸς
ὅταν τις
ἐκείνῳ
ὁμοίον. ἢ
ἐπαινεῖ
τὸν ἐαυτοῦ
ἐναντίας
ἡχοῖα,
ὅτι δ' ἔστι
ἄγαθος.

“That * God is full of indignation against
“such as reproach one that is like to him, or
“that praise one that is contrarily affected (or
“unlike); but such is the good man (i.e. he
“is one like God). A good man (as it shortly
“after follows) is the holiest thing in the world,
“and a wicked man the most polluted thing.

Plat. in Minoc.

Τέτι δ'
ἐνεκα
φροῦ,
ἵνα μὴ
ἀνδρωπο
ὦν ἀν-
δρωπε,
οἷς ἡρῶ
ἀλλ' ὡς
ἀμαρτ
νῆς.

“And let me warn such haters of holiness and
“holy men in the words of this Author immediate-
“ly subjoined; “And this I say for this cause, that
“thou being but a man, the son of a man, no
“more offend in speaking against an Hero, one
“who is a Son of God.

“Adasinks men should be ashamed to profess the
“belief of a life to come, while they cannot behold
“without indignation, nor mention but with derisi-
“on, that holiness without which it can never be at-
“tained, and which is indeed the seed and principle
“of the thing it self.

“But such are not likely much to trouble them-
“selves with this discourse. There's little in it in-
“deed

*

To the Reader.

*doed of Art or Ornament to invite or gratifie such
as the Subject it self invites not. And nothing at
all but what was apprehended might be some way
useful. The affectation of garnishing a margent
with the names of Authors, I have ever thought
a vain pedantry; yet have not declined the occa-
sional use of a few that occurred. He that writes
to the World, must reckon himself debtor to the
wise and unwise. If what is done shall be found
with any to have promoted its proper end; His
praises to God shall follow it (as his prayers do
that it may) who professes himself,*

**A Well-willer to the
Souls of men.**

J. H.

Christian

Christian Reader.

YOU whose hearts are set on Heaven, who are daily laying up a treasure there, here is a welcome Messenger, to tell you more than perhaps you have well considered, of the nature of your future Blessedness, and to illustrate the Map of the Land of Promise, and to bring you another cluster of its Grapes: Here is an useful help to make you know that Holiness doth participate of Glory, and that Heaven is at least virtually in the Seed of Grace. Though this life be properly called a *life of Faith*, as contradistinct from the *intuition* and *fruition* hereafter, as well as from the lower life of *sense*; yet is it a great truth, and not sufficiently considered and improved, that we have here *more than Faith*, to acquaint us with the Blessedness expected. Between *Faith* and *Glory*, there is the *spirit of holiness*, the love of God, the heavenly desires, which are kindled by Faith, and are those branches

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branches on which the happy flower and fruit must grow : They are the *name* and *mark* of God upon us : They are our *earnest*, our *pledg*, and the *first fruits*. And is not this more than a word of Promise only ? Therefore though all Christians must live by Faith, marvel not that I tell you, that you may, you must have more than Faith. Is not a *pledg*, and *earnest*, a *first-fruits* more ? Therefore have Christians, not only a Spirit to evidence their Title, but also some foretaste of Heaven it self. For *Faith* in *Christ* is to recover us to *God* ; and so much as we have of *God*, so much of fruition ; and so much as Faith hath kindled in you of the love of *God*, so much foretaste you have of Heaven ; for you are deceived, if you think, that any one Notion speaketh more to you of *Heaven* and of your *ultimate end*, than *THE LOVE OF GOD*. And though no unsound ill-grounded Faith will serve to cause this sacred Love, yet when it is caused, it overtops this cause ; and he that perceiveth the operations of a strong effectual Love, hath an acquaintance with *God* and *Heaven* which is above that of believing. *Faith* seeth the Feast, but
Love

Christian Reader.

Love is the *rusting* of it. And therefore it is, that the holiest Souls stick closest unto God, because (though their reasoning faculty may be defective) they know him by the highest and most tenacious kind of knowledge, which this World affordeth, (as I have lately shewed elsewhere). Here you have described to you, the true *witness* of the Spirit; Not that of supposed *internal voices*, which they are usually most taken up with, who have the smallest knowledge, and Faith, and Love, and the greatest self-esteem, or spiritual pride, with the strongest phantasies and passions: But the *objective* and the *sealing* testimony, the Divine Nature, the renewed Image of God, whose Children are known by being *like* to their heavenly Father, even by being *holy* as he is *holy*. This is the Spirit of Adoption, by which we are inclined, by *holy love to God* and confidence in him, to cry *Abba Father*, and to fly unto him: The Spirit of *Sanctification* is thereby in us the Spirit of *Adoption*: For both signify but the giving us that *love to God*, which is the *filial nature*, and our *Fathers Image*.

And this Treatise doth happily direct thee

Christian Reader.

thee to that faithful beholding God in Righteousness, which must here begin this blessed assimilation, which full intuition will for ever perfect.

It is a happy sign that God is about to repair our ruins and divisions, when he stirreth up his servants to speak so much of *heaven*, and to call up the minds of impatient complainers, and contentious censurers, and ignorant self-conceited dividers, and of worldly, unskilful, and unmerciful Pastors, to look to that state where all the godly shall be one, and to turn those thoughts to the furtherance of *holiness*, to provoke one another to *love* and to *good works*, which too many lay out upon their *hay* and *stubble*, And to call men from *judging* and *despising* each other (and worse than both those) about their *meats*, and *drinks*, and *days*, to study *righteousness*, and *peace*, and *joy in the Holy Ghost*. For he that in these things serveth Christ (in which his Kingdom doth consist) is acceptable to God, and approved of men (that are wise and good). Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edifie another; whilest the contentious for meats will destroy the work of God, Rom. 14. 17, 18,

Christian Reader.

19, 20. The *union* between peace and *holiness* is so strict, that he that truly promoteth *one* promoteth *both*, Heb. 12. 14. Jam. 3. 17. The true way of our *union* is excellently described, Eph. 4. 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16.

If any plain unlearned Readers shall blame the accurateness of the stile, they must remember, that those persons have not the least need to hear of *heaven*, and to be drawn up from the vanities of earth who cannot digest a looser stile.

As God hath endued the worthy Author with a more than ordinary measure of judiciousness, even soundness and accurateness of understanding, with seriousness, spirituality, and a heavenly mind; so we have for our common benefit, the effects of all these happy qualifications, in this *judicious heavenly discourse*. And if my recommendations may in any measure further your acceptance, improvement and practising of so edifying a Treatise, it will answer the ends of him who waiteth with you in hope for the same Salvation,

Rich. Baxter.

Aston, May 30.

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THE

PSAL. XVII. 15.

*As for me, I will behold thy
face in righteousness: I shall
be satisfied, when I awake,
with thy likeness.*

CHAP. I.

*A Proemial Discourse. A reflection
upon some foregoing Verses of the
Psalm, by way of Introduction to
the Text. A Consideration of its
somewhat various readings, and of
its literal importance. A discussion
of its real importance, so far as is
necessary to the settling the Subject of
the present Discourse.*



THE continual mixture of
Good and Evil in this
present state of things;
with its uncertain flu-
tuations, and subjec-
tion to perpetual changes;
do naturally prompt a
considering mind to the
belief and hope of another, that may be both

B

more

more perfect, and more permanent. For certainly it could never be a design adequate (or any way agreeable) to the Divine Wisdom and Goodness, that the blessed God should raise such a thing as this lower Creation out of nothing, only to give himself the temporary pleasure of beholding the alternate Joys and Sorrows of (the best part thereof) his Reasonable Creature seated in it: Nor a delight at all proportionable to an eternally happy Being, when he hath connaturaliz'd such a Creature to this sensible World; only to take notice how variously the passions he hath planted in him, may be mov'd and stirr'd by the variety of occasions which he shall thence be presented with; and what sudden and contrary impressions may be made upon his easie passive senses, by the interchanged strokes and touches of contrary objects: How quickly he can raise him into a transport of high contentment and pleasure, and then how soon he can again reduce him to a very Paroxysm of anguish and despair. It would discover us to have very vile and low thoughts of God, if we did not judg it altogether unanswerable to his Perfections, to design no further thing in creating this World, and placing such a Creature as Man in it, than only to please himself for a while with such a spectacle, and then at last clear the Stage, and shut up all again in an eternal silent Darknes. If we could suppose a *man* furnished with such *power*, he would surely add little to the reputation

reputation of his being *wise* or *good* beyond other *men*, by a design so to use it.

Much less can we think it worthy of God to *perpetuate* such a state of things as this, and continue a succession of such Persons and Actions as we now behold in the world, through eternal Generations, only to perpetuate to Himself the same pleasure in the exercise of his Immense Power upon created Natures, over which he hath so infinite advantage.

And indeed nothing can be more unconceivable, than that the great Creator and Author of all things, should frame a Creature of so vast comprehension as the Spirit of man, put into it a capacity of knowing and conversing with himself, give it some prospect of his own Glory and Blessedness; raise thereby, in many, boundless unsatisfied desires after him, and unexpressible pleasure in the pre-conceived hope of being received into the communion of that Glory and Blessedness; and yet defeat and blast so great an Expectation, by the unsuspected reducement of the very Subject of it again to nothing. Yea, and that he should deal herein (as in that case he must) the most hardly with the best: And that such Souls, whose meer love and devotedness to him, had made them abandon the pleasures of this life, and run through whatsoever difficulties for his sake, should fare worse than the very worst; were, beyond all the rest, most utterly unimaginable, and a thought

Ἐν ᾧ ὁ
 ἄμα τοῖς
 σώμασι
 διαλυ-
 οῦνται καὶ
 τὸ τῆς
 ψυχῆς ὅτι
 δὴ ποτὲ
 ὄντι μεῖνα
 συναλυ-
 εῖται, &c.
 Dionys.

Halicar.

which *Pagan*-reason hath not known how to digest or entertain. *If* (saith one, and he speaks the sense of many other, as well as his own) *with the dissolution of our Bodies, the essence of the Soul, whatsoever that be, should be dissolved too, and for ever cease to be any thing; I know not how I can account them blessed, that never having enjoyed any good as the reward of their Virtue, have even perished for Virtue its self.*

Antiq. Rom. lib. 8.

Wherefore it is consequent, that this present state is only intended for tryal to the spirits of men, in order to their attainment of a better state in a better world: That is, inasomuch as the infinitely wise and blessed God had given being to such a Creature as Man, in which both Worlds (the Material and the Immaterial) did meet; and who (in respect of his Earthly and Spiritual natures, had in him somewhat suitable to each. And whereas this Creature had lost (with his Interest) his very inclination to the Spiritual Objects, and enjoyments of the purer Immaterial World (wherein alone his true blessedness could consist), suffered a vile depression of his Spirit unto this gross Corporeal World, and hereby brought himself under a necessity of being miserable, his nobler part having nothing now to satisfy it, but what it was become unsuitable and disaffected to.

His

His Merciful Creator, being intent upon his restitution, thought fit not to bring it about by a sudden and violent hand (as it were to catch him into Heaven against his will): but to raise his Spirit into its just Dominion and Sovereignty in him, by such gradual Methods as were most suitable to a rational intelligent nature: That is, to discover to him, that he had such a thing as Spirit about him; whence it was fallen, how low it was sunk, to what state it was yet capable to be rais'd, and what he had design'd and done for its happy recovery. And hence by the secret and powerful insinuations of his own Light and Grace, to awaken his drowsie and slumbering Reason, and encline his perverse and wayward Will to the consideration and choice of such things as that felicity consists in; which that better world can afford, and his better part enjoy.

And while he propounds such things to him, how reasonable and agreeable was it, that he should keep him sometime under a just probation (yea, how much was there in it of a gracious and compassionate Indulgence, often to renew the trial), whether he would yet bestir himself, and (having so great hopes before him, and such helps and aids afforded him, and ready to be afforded) apply, at last, his intellectual and elective powers, to mind and close with so gracious overtures, in order to his own eternal advancement and blessedness?

Nor was it an unreasonable expectation that he should do so. For, however the temporal good and evil that may constantly affect his sensitive part and powers, be present and near; but the eternal misery or blessedness of his Soul, future and remote: Yet inasmuch as he is capable of understanding the vast disproportions of *Time* and *Eternity*; of a mortal Flesh, and an immortal Spirit: How preposterous a course were it, and unworthy of a man; yea, how dishonourable and reproachful to his Maker, should he prefer the momentary pleasures of narrow incapacious sense, to the everlasting enjoyments of an enlarged comprehensive Spirit? Or, for the avoiding the pains and miseries of the former kind, incur those of the later?

Rom. 2.
6, 7, 8, 9.

Whence also, the Holy God doth not expect and require only, that men should make that wiser choice; but doth most justly lay the weight of their eternal states upon their doing, or not doing so. And in that day when he shall *render to every one according to their works*, make this the Rule of his final judgment, *To allot to them, who by a patient continuance in well-doing, seek for honour, glory, and immortality, eternal life. To the rest, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, &c. and that whether they be Jews or Gentiles.*

Nor is it a new thing in the world, that some among the children of men should in this comply with the righteous will of God,
and

and so judg and chuse for themselves, as he is pleased to direct and prescribe. 'Tis a course approved by the concurrent suffrage of all them, in all times and ages, into whose minds the true light hath shined, and whom God hath inspired with that wisdom whereby he maketh wise to salvation.

That numerous Assembly of the perfected Spirits of the just, have agreed in this common resolution; and did in their several generations, ere they had past this state of trial, with an Heroick magnanimity trample this present World under their feet, and aspire to the glory of the World to come; relieving themselves against all the grievances they have *suffered* from such whose portion is in *this life*, with the alone hope and confidence of what they were to *enjoy* in *another*.

And hereof we have an eminent and illustrious instance in this Context, where the ground is laid of the following Discourse. For introduction whereto, observe that

The Title speaks the Psalm a Prayer of *David*. The matter of the Prayer is, preservation from his Enemies. Not to go over the whole Psalm, we have in the 13 and 14 verses, the sum of his desires, with a description of the persons he prays to be delivered from: In which Description every Character is an Argument to enforce his prayer.

From the Wicked | *q. d.* They are equally enemies to thee and me; not more opposite

to me by their cruelty, than by their wickedness they are to thee. Vindicate then, at once, thy self, and deliver me.

Thy sword, thy hand] Thou canst as easily command and manage them, as a man may wield his sword, or move his hand. Wilt thou suffer thine own sword, thine own hand, to destroy thine own Servant?

Men of the world, which have their portion in this life] Time, and this lower world, bound all their hopes and fears; They have no serious believing apprehensions of any thing beyond this present life; therefore have nothing to with-hold them from the most injurious violence, if thou with-hold them not; (*Men that believe not another world, are the ready Actors of any imaginable mischiefs and tragedies in this*).

Whose belly thou fillest] i. e. Their sensual appetite: As oftentimes that term is used. * *With thy hid treasures*] viz. the Riches which either God is wont to hide in the bowels of the earth, or lock up in the Repository of Providence, dispensing them at his own pleasure.

They are full of children] So it appears by that which follows, it ought to be read, and not according to that gross * (but easie) mistake of some Transcribers of the Seventy.

As if in all this he had pleaded thus: Lord, thou hast abundantly indulged those men already, what need they more? They have

* Rom.
16. 18.
Phil. 3. 19.

* ὅσων for
ἑσων.

have *themselves*, from *thy* unregarded bounty, their own vast swoln desires sufficiently filled, enough for their own time; and when they can live no longer in their Persons, they may in their Posterity, and leave not Strangers, but their numerous Off-spring, their Heirs. Is it not enough that their *avarice* be gratified, except their *malice* be also? That they have whatsoever they can conceive desirable for themselves, unless they may also infer what ever they can think mischievous on me?

To this description of his Enemies, he *ex opposito*, subjoins some account of himself in this his closure of the Psalm: *As for me*] Here he is at his statique point; and, after some appearing discomposure, his spirit returns to a consistency, in consideration of his own more happy state, which he opposes and prefers to theirs in the following respects.

That *they* were wicked, *he* righteous. *I will behold thy face* in righteousness]. That *their* happiness was worldly, terrene, such only as did spring from the earth; *His* heavenly and divine, such as should result from *the Face and Image of God*. *Theirs* present, temporary, compass within this life; *His*, future, everlasting, to be enjoyed when he should *awake*. *Theirs* partial, defective, such as would but gratifie their bestial part, fill their bellies; *His* adequate, compleat, (the *ανδραμορια το σωτηρις*), such as should satisfy the *Man*. *I shall be satisfied*, &c.

The

אני כצדק
אחזה פליק
אשכנה
בהקיצ
המונה

Sept. Εγω δε εν
δικαιοσυνη δεσφησο-
μαι, τα περισσώτα-
τα χάριτα θεοσυμμι εν
τα δεσφησαι τω
δεξαν σε.

The Vulgar Latin,
*Ego autem in justi-
tia apparebo conspe-
ctui tuo; satiabor
cum apparuerit glo-
ria tua.* Exactly
following the Se-
venty, as doth the
Ethiopic. The Cal-
dee Paraphrase dis-
agrees little; the

Arabic less; the

Syriack mislook it seems תמונה for אמונה, and so read
that word *faith* which we read *likeness*.

The variety in rendring this Verse
(to be seen by comparing the Ori-
ginal and Translation noted in the
Margent) need not give us any trou-
ble, the differences not being of great
moment, nor our own reading liable
to exception. The word תמונה about
which is the greatest diversity, hath
the significancy we here give it, in the
second Commandment, and constant-
ly elsewhere. And then, what more
proper *English* can this Text, be ca-
pable of, than it hath in our Bibles?
Each word hath its true and genuine
import; and the Syntax is sufficient-
ly regular, and grammatical of the
whole.

Only as to the former, that usual and
obvious observation must here have place;
that the כ prefixed to צדק, and which,
with it, we read [*in righteousness*], doth
often signifie among its various acceptati-
ons, *by* or *through*; and that, not only as
denoting instrumentality; but more at large,
the place of any *medium* necessary to the
attainment of the end it subserves to;
whence the same use of the *Greek* εν, that
answers thereunto, is wont to go for an
Hebraism.

And

The Blessedness of the Righteous.

11

And as to the latter, the only thing liable to controverſie, is, whether the Gerund ברהיץ is to be conſtrued with the *perſon ſpeaking* [when I awake], or [in my awaking]; or with the *thing*; the likenesſ or image ſpoken of [in the awaking of thine image], or [when thine image ſhall awake]: and I conceive we need not diſcuſs it, but following our own Tranſlation, leave the judgment of it to the ear it ſelf, which (as *Elihu* tells us) trieth words,

Hieronymus (juxta Hebr.) reads the words exactly as we do: *Ego in juſtitia videbo faciem tuam, implebar,*

cum evigilavero, ſimilitudine tua.

In the mean time, the *real* importance of this Scripture more calls for diſcuſſion than the *literal*; concerning which, a threefold enquiry will be neceſſary for the ſetling the Subject of the following Diſcourſe.

1. What relation this [*righteouſneſs*] muſt be underſtood to have to the Viſion of God's face, and the other conſequent bleſſedneſs.
2. What *time* or ſtate [*awaking*] refers to.
3. What is intended by the [*likenesſ of God*].

To the firſt, It is only neceſſary to ſay at preſent, That the already noted import of the Prepoſition [*in*] being ſuppoſed moſt בצור
ſecurus beſt, dered here [by or through *righteouſneſs*], as by the condition in which he may expect the return of God's Mercies here, or the eternal Viſion of him hereafter, &c. So the Learned Dr. *Hammond*, Annot. in loc. quoting alſo *Caſtellio* to the ſame purpoſe.

ſutable

fitable to this Text (as apparently it is), *Righteousness* must be lookt upon in reference to this *vision*, not as in an *idle* or *meerly casual concomitancy*, or as an unconcern'd circumstance, that hath nothing to do with the business spoken of; but as in a *close* and *intimate connexion* therewith; being, 1. Antecedent, 2. Conducible, 3. Necessary thereto. Nor can I better express its place, and reference to it, *generally and in one word*, than in saying it *qualifies* for it; which how it doth, will be more proper to consider hereafter. It may now suffice to say, those words give us the *qualified subject of this blessedness* [I in righteousness], a righteous person as such.

2. *To the Second*; Taking it for granted, that none will understand this *awaking* as opposed to natural *sleep*: In the borrowed or tropical sense, it must be understood to intend either *some better state in this life*, in comparison whereof the *Psalmist* reckons his present state but as a sleep; or the future state of blessedness in the other life. There have been some who have understood it of the former, and thought the *Psalmist* to speak only of an hoped freedom from his present temporal afflictions; but then, that which will be imply'd, seems not so specious; that trouble and affliction should be signified by the necessarily presupposed *sleep*, which sure doth more resemble *rest* than *trouble*.

I conceive it less exceptionable to refer [awaking] to the *blessed state of Saints after this life*. For, That

That Saints, at that *time when* this was writ, had the knowledg of such a state (indeed a *Saint not believing a life to come*, is a perfect contradiction) no doubt can be made by any that hath ever so little read and compared the Old and New-Testament. We are plainly told, that those excellent persons mentioned in the famous Roll *, liv'd by that faith, *which was the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen.* That of them, *Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*, while they lived in *Canaan*, yet *sought a better, an heavenly Country: Confessing themselves pilgrims and strangers on earth.* We know it was the more general belief of the *Jews* in our Saviour's time. And whence should they have it, but from the Old Testament? Thither our Saviour remits them to search it out, and the way to it. The Apostle Saint *Paul* gives it as the common faith of the Twelve Tribes, grounded upon the promise made to their forefathers; and thence *prudentially* he herein states the Cause wherein he was *now* engag'd; supposing it would be generally relented, that he should be call'd in question for avowing (only) so known and received a truth. Sure they were beholden to these Sacred Writings they had then among them, for so common a belief; and since it is out of question, from our Saviour's express words, they do contain the ground of that belief; what cause have we to be so shy of so interpreting Scriptures that have a fair aspect that way?

* Heb. II.

ver. 1.

9.

13.

14.

15.

16.

Joh. 5. 39.

Acts 16.

& 6, 7.

compared with the 8.

Is

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Is it, that we can devise to fasten here and there another *sense* upon divers such? I wonder what one Text can be mentioned in all the Old Testament to this purpose, wherein one may not do so: And what then would be the tendency of this course, but to deny in *all the particulars*, what, upon so clear evidence, we are in the *general* forced to admit? and to put *Moses*, and *Abraham*, and *David*, in a lower Class than *Pythagoras*, and *Socrates*, and *Plato*?

And I think it would not be easie to find one Text in all that part of the Bible, where both the words thereof, and the Context, do more fairly comply, than in this, so as not only to admit, but even to invite that Interpretation.

For the term [*awake*], about which the present enquiry is, How apt and obvious is the analogy between our awaking out of natural sleep, and the holy soul's rising up out of the darkness and torpor of its present state, into the enlivening light of God's presence? It is *truly* said so to *awake*, at its first quitting these darksome Regions, *when* it lays aside its cumbersome night-vail. It doth so, more perfectly, in the joyful morning of the Resurrection-day, when mortality is swallowed up in life, and all the yet-hovering shadows of it are vanished and fled away. And how known and usual an application this is of the metaphorical terms of *sleeping* and *awaking* in Holy Writ, I need not tell them who have read the

the Bible. Nor doth this Interpretation less fitly accord to the other contents of this verse: For to what state do the *sight of Gods face*, and *satisfaction with his likeness*, so fully agree, as to that of future blessedness in the other World.

But then the contexture of discourse in this and the fore-going verse together, seems plainly to determine us to this sense: For what can be more conspicuous in them, than a purposed comparison and opposition of two states of Felicity mutually each to other? *That of the wicked*, whom he calls *men of time* (as the words are rendred by * one, and do literally signifie) and *whose portion*, he tells us, *is in this life*; and *the righteous man's*, his own; which he expected not to be till he should awake, *i. e.* not till *after this life*.

ממתי
מהם
Homines
de tempore
Pagnin.

Thirdly, It is further to be enquired, How we are here to understand [*the likeness of God*]. I doubt not but we are to understand by it, *his glory*. And the only difficulty which it will be necessary at present to consider about it, is, Whether we are to take it *objectively*, or *subjectively*; for the glory to be *represented* to the blessed soul, or the glory to be *imprest* upon it; the glory which it is to *behold*, or the glory it shall *bear*. And I conceive the difference is more easily capable of *accommodation*, than of a strict *decision* on either part.

By [*face*] is undoubtedly meant *objective glory*, and that in its most perfect representation

presentation (the face being, as we know with men, the chief seat of aspectable Majesty and Beauty). Hence when *Moses* desires to see God's glory, though he did vouchsafe some discovery of it, yet he tells him his *face* cannot be seen. Hereupon, therefore, the next expression [*thy likeness*] might the more plausibly be restrained to *subjective glory*, so as to denote the Image of God now in its most perfect impression on the blessed soul.

But that I insist not on: Supposing therefore, that what is signified by [*face*], be repeated over again in this word [*likeness*], yet I conceive the expression is not varied in vain; but having more to say than only that he expected a state of future *Vision*, viz. that he assured himself of *satisfaction* too, another word was thought fit to be used that might signify also *somewhat* that must intervene in order to that satisfaction. 'Tis certain the meer objective representation and consequent intuition of the most excellent (even the Divine) glory, cannot satisfy a soul remaining disaffected and unsuitable thereunto. It can only satisfy, as, *being represented*; it forms the soul into the same image, and attempts it to it self, *q. d.* I expect hereafter to see the blessed face of God, and to be my self blessed or satisfied by his Glory, at once appearing to me, and transfusing it self upon me. In short therefore, I understand by that term, *the glory of God as transforming, or as impressive of it self.* If therefore, *Glory the Object*
of

of the Soul's Vision, shall by any be thought to be intended in it, I contend not; supposing only, that the Object be taken not materially, or potentially only, for the thing visible in it self considered; but formally, and in esse actuali objecti; that is, as now actually impressing it self, or as connoting such an impression upon the beholding soul; for so only is it productive of such a pleasure and satisfaction to it, as must ensue. As in this form of speech [such a man takes pleasure in knowledg], it is evident knowledg must be taken there both objectively, for the things known; and subjectively, for the actual perception of those things; inasmuch as, apparently, both must concur to work him delight. So it will appear, to any one that attentively considers it, glory must be taken in that passage, *We rejoyce in hope of the glory of God.* 'Tis Divine glory both revealed and received; His exhibition and communication of it, according to his Immensury; and our participation of it, according to our measure, that must concur to our eternal satisfaction. Herein the Platonick adage* hath evident truth in it; Pleasure is here certainly made up of something finite, and something infinite, meeting together. 'Tis not (as the Philosopher speaks) a *χωριστον*, but a *κινητον τι*, not any thing separate from the soul, but something it possesses, that can make it happy. 'Tis not happy by an incommunicate happiness, nor glorious by an incommunicate glory. Indeed, the discovery

Rom. 5: 2.

* Voluptatis generatio est ex infiniti & finiti copulatione.

Rom. 8. 18
eis mads.

of such a glory to an inglorious unholy soul, must rather torment than satisfy. The future glory of Saints is therefore called a *glory to be revealed in them* (or *into them*, as the word signifies). And in the foregoing words, the Apostle assures Christ's fellow-sufferers, that they shall be *glorified* together with him. Surely the notation of that word, the formal notion of glorification, cannot import so little as only *to be a Spectator of Glory*; it must signify a being *made glorious*.

Nor is the common and true Maxim otherwise intelligible, that grace and glory differ only in degree. For certainly it could never enter into the mind of a *sober* man (though how dangerously some speak, that might possibly have been so if too much learning had not made them *mad*, will be animadverted in its place), that *objective glory*, and *grace in Saints*, were the same specifick (much less the same numerical) thing.

'Tis true, that Scripture often expresses the future blessedness, by *vision of God*. But where that phrase is used to signify it alone, 'tis evident (as within the lower Region of Grace, words of knowledge do often imply affection, and correspondent impressions on the soul) it must be understood of affective transformative Vision, such as hath conformity to God most inseparably conjunct with it. And, that we might understand so much, they are elsewhere both expressly mentioned

tioned together, as joynt-ingredients into a Saints blessedness; as in those words so full of clear and rich sense: *When he shall appear, we shall be like him: for we shall see him as he is.*

Which Text I take for a plain Comment upon this: and methinks it should not easily be supposable, they should both speak so near the same words, and not intend the same sense: You have in both the same season, *When he shall appear, When I shall awake*: The same subject, the *righteous* person *born of God* (compare the close of the former Chapter with the beginning of this); and *I in righteousness*: The same Vision, *We shall see him as he is; I shall behold his face*: The same Assimilation, *We shall be like him, I shall be satisfied with his likeness* (concerning the *χρῆσις* or habitude this Vision and Assimilation mutually have to one another, there will be consideration had in its place).

I therefore conceive neither of these Notions of the *Divine likeness*, do exclude the other. If it be enquired, which is principally meant? That needs not be determined: If the latter, it supposes the former; if the former, it infers the latter. Without the first, the other cannot be; without this other, the first cannot satisfy.

If any yet disagree to this interpretation of this Text, let them affix the Doctrine propounded from it, to that other last mentioned (which only hath not the express mention of a consequent satisfaction, as this hath;

whence therefore, as being in this respect fuller, my thoughts were pitcht upon this).

Only withal let it be considered, how much more easie it is, to *imagine another* sense, and suppose it possible, than to *disprove* this, or evince it *impossible*. How far probable it is, must be left to the judgment of the indifferent: With whom it may not be insignificant to add, That thus it hath been understood by interpreters (I might adventure to say the generality) of all sorts. However the few annexed * (for I neither apprehend the *necessity*, nor have the present *conveniency* of alledging many) will suffice to avoid any imputation of singularity or novelty.

* Agitur
de resurrectione &
Manifestatione
gloriæ cœlestis, Ruf.
fin. in loc. Comment.

Cum apparuerit gloria tua, i.e. gloria resurrectionis. Bed. in Psalm.

How the Jews were wont to understand it, may be seen at one view in that of Petrus Galatinus in loc. Duo mi Capnio me hac per priscas Judæorum Scripturas ostendere hortaris, & generalem mortuorum resurrectionem futuram esse & eam per Messiam factum iri, Primum itaque patet non solum per sacræ scripturæ testimonia verum etiam per Talmudistarum dicta. Nam illud quidem Psalm. 17. dictum Ego in justitiâ — &c. sic exponunt, & presertim Rabbi Abraham Aven Ezra & Rabbi Solomo, &c. And so he goes on to recite their words, De Arcanis Catholicæ veritatis.

Opponit hæc, iis quæ de impiis dixerat. Illi Sapiunt terrena saturantur filiis, & portionem suam in hac vitâ ponunt, mihi verò contempta est hæc vitâ; ad futuram festino, ubi non in divitiis, sed in justitiâ videbo, non terrena hæc transitura, sed ipsam faciem tuam, nec saturabor in filiis carnis sed cum evigilavero tuâ similitudine, sicut. 1 Joh. 3. 2. — Cum apparuerit, &c. Luth. in Psalm.

Resurgam è mortuis — videbo te perfectissimè sicut es, Similis ero tibi Jun. & Tremel. in Psalm. 17.

Mollerus

Mollerus thinks it ought not to be restrained to life eternal, but saith, some understand it of the glory, *quâ ornabuntur pii in vitâ aternâ.* And adds, — *& quidem non male.* In

—— *Ego vero & omnes electi tui — piè & justè vivimus in hoc sæculo, ut aliquando in futuro sæculo videamus faciem tuam, & eâ faciemur cum sc. à pulvere terræ evigilaverimus & reformati fuerimus ad similitudinem Christi tui.* *Seb. Munster. in notis in loc.*

—— *Cum ego ad imaginem tuam conditus resurrexero.* *Vatablus* (though he adds, *alii ad resurrectionem non referunt*)

—— *De futuræ vitæ felicitate ait (satiabor quum experiscar, i. e. quum resurgam è mortuis — Similitudine tuâ, hoc est videbo te perfectissimè, sicuti es ; & Similis ero tibi quum patefactus Christus glorioso adventu suo, 1 Joh. 3. 2. Fabrit. Conc. in Psal. 17. ult.*

Describit his verbis Psalmographus beatitudinem aternam filiorum Dei. *Gesnerus in loc.*

C H A P. II.

A summary Proposal of the Doctrine contained in this Scripture. A distribution of it into three distinct Heads of Discourse, viz. 1. The qualified Subject. 2. The Nature. 3. The Season of the Blessedness here spoken of. The first of these taken into consideration, where the qualification [Righteousness] is treated of. About which is shewn, 1. What it is. 2. How it qualifies.

NOW the foregoing sense of the words being supposed, it appears that the proper Argument of this Scripture is, *The blessedness of the Righteous in the other life, consisting in the vision and participation of the Divine glory, with the satisfaction that resulteth hence.*

In which summary account of the Doctrine here contained, Three general Heads of Discourse offer themselves to our view.

The { Subject
Nature
Season } of this Blessedness.

Or

The Blessedness of the Righteous.

21

Or to whom it belongs, wherein it consists, and when it shall be enjoyed.

First then, we begin with the consideration of the subject, unto whom this blessedness appertains. And we find it exprest in the Text, in these only words [*I; in righteousness*]; which amounts to as much as *A righteous person as such*. They represent to us the subject of this Blessedness in its proper qualifications: Wherein, our business is to consider his qualification [*Righteousness*], under which notion only he is concerned in the present Discourse; And about which, two things are to be enquired:

1.

What it imports,
How it qualifies.

First, What it imports. I take *Righteousness* here to be opposed to *Wickedness* in the foregoing verse (as was intimated before); and so understand it in an equal latitude, not of *particular*, but of *universal righteousness*: That is, not that particular Virtue which inclines men to give every one their right (unless in that *every one*, you would include also the blessed God himself, the Sovereign common Lord of all) but an universal rectitude of heart and life, comprehending not only equity towards men, but piety towards God also. A conformity to the Law in general, in its utmost extent, adequately opposite to *sin* (which is indeed of larger extent than

1.

1 Joh. 1. 2.

1 Joh. 3. 4.

Ἐν δὲ
δικαιοσύ-
νῃ συλλέ-
βδω
πρὸς ἀ-
ρετὴν ὄντι.

Luk. i.
5, 6.

wickedness; and in what different respects *Righteousness* is commensurate to the one and the other, we shall see by and by) as that is, generally, said to be ἀνομία, *a transgression of the Law*.

Among Moralists, such a comprehensive Notion of *Righteousness* as is inclusive of all other Virtues, is not unknown. But in Scripture it is its much more ordinary acceptance. To give instances, were to suppose too much ignorance in the Reader; and to enumerate the passages in which this term is taken in that extensive sense, were too great an unnecessary burden to the Writer. It were indeed to transcribe a great part of the Bible. How familiar is the opposition of *righteous* and *wicked*, and *righteous* and *sinner*, in sacred Language! And how fully co-extent *righteousness* is, in the Scripture-notion of it, to the whole Law of God, that one passage sufficiently discovers; where 'tis said of *Zacharias* and *Elizabeth*, that they were both *righteous* before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless.

'Tis true indeed, that when the words *godliness* or *holiness* are in conjunction with this term, its significancy is divided and shared with them, so as that they signify, in that case, *conformity to the will of God* in the duties of the first Table, and this is confined to those of the second: Otherwise, being put alone, it signifies the whole duty of man, as the other expressions also do in the same

same case, especially the later of them.

As it seems not to be within the present design of the Context to take notice of any *imputed wickedness* of the opposite sort of persons, other than what was *really in them*, and whereby they might be fitly characterized: so, I conceive, that *imputed righteousness* is not here meant; that is inherent in the person of the Mediator; but that which is truly subjected in a Child of God, and descriptive of him. Nor must any think it strange, that all the requisites to our Salvation, are not found together in one Text of Scripture. The Righteousness of Him, whom we are to adore as made *sin* for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him; hath a much higher sphere peculiar and appropriate to it self. *This* of which we now speak, in its own inferior and subordinate place, is necessary also to be (both had and) understood.

It must be understood by viewing it in its Rule, in conformity whereto it stands; which must needs be some Law of God. There hath been a twofold Law given by God to Mankind, as the measure of an *universal* Righteousness, the one made for *innocent*, the other for *lapsed* man; which are distinguished by the Apostle under the names of the *Law of works*, and the *Law of faith*. It can never be possible, that any of the Apostate sons of *Adam* should be denominated Righteous by the former of these Laws, the Righteousness thereof consisting in a perfect and sinless obedience.

Ro. 3. 27.

The

The latter therefore is the only measure and rule of this Righteousness, *viz.* the *Law of Faith*; or that part of the Gospel-revelation which contains and discovers our duty, what we are to be and do in order to our Blessedness; being, as to the matter of it, the whole Moral Law, before appertaining to the Covenant of Works, attempered to the state of fallen sinners, by Evangelical mitigations and indulgence, by the super-added precepts of Repentance and Faith in a Mediator, with all the other duty respecting the Mediator, as such; and cloathed with a new form as it is *now* taken into the constitution of the Covenant of Grace.

This Rule, though it be in the whole of it capable of coming under one common Notion, *as being the standing obliging Law of Christ's Mediator Kingdom*; yet according to the different matter of it, its obligations and annexed sanctions are different.

As to its matter, it must be understood to require

1. The meer being and sincerity of those gracious principles, with their essential Acts (as there is opportunity) expressed therein, in opposition to the nullity and insincerity of them.

2. All the possible degrees and improvements of such Principles and Acts, in opposition to any the least failure or defect. *In the former respect*, it measures the very essence of this Righteousness, and enjoins what concerns the *being* of the righteous man as such.

In

In the latter, it measures all the super-added degrees of this Righteousness (which relations, where they have a mutable foundation, admit), enjoining what concerns the perfection of the righteous man. In the former respect, Righteousness is opposed to Wickedness, as in that of the Psalmist, I have kept the ways of the Lord, and have not wickedly departed from my God--therefore hath the Lord recompenced me according to my righteousness. In the latter to sin, with which the Apostle makes unrighteousness co-extent, in these words, If we say we have no sin, we deceive our selves, &c. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Psa. 18. 21.
Ver. 24.

Accordingly are its sanctions divers. For wherein it enjoins the former of these, the essence of this righteousness, in opposition to a total absence thereof, it is constitutive of the terms of salvation, and obligeth under the penalty of eternal death. So are faith, repentance, love, subjection, &c. required: *If ye believe not that I am he, ye shall dye in your sins. He that believeth not, is condemned already.—The wrath of God abideth on him.*

Joh. 8. 24.
C. 3. 18. 36.

—If ye repent not, ye shall all likewise perish. Repent, that your sins may be blotted out.

Lu. 13. 3. 5.
Act. 3. 19.
C. 5. 31.

—Him hath God exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour to give repentance and remission of sins. If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maran atha. He that loveth Father or Mother more than me, is not worthy of me, &c. If any man come to me, and hate

I Cor. 16.
22.
Matt. 10.
27.
Lu. 14. 26.

Heb. 3. 9.
2 Thes. 1.
8, 9, &c.

hate not his father and mother, and wife and children, and brethren and sisters, yea, and his own life also (that is, as the former Scripture expounds this, loves them not less than me), he cannot be my Disciple (i. e. while he remains in that temper of mind he now is of, he must needs be wholly unrelated unto me, and incapable of benefit by me, as well as he is indocible, and not susceptible of my further instructions, neither capable of the precepts or privileges belonging to Discipleship). He is the author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him, and will come in flaming fire to take vengeance of those that know not God, and obey not his Gospel; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, &c. Where it is only the sincerity of those several requisites, that is under so severe penalty exacted and called for; inasmuch as he that is sincerely a Believer, a Penitent, a lover of God or Christ, an obedient Subject, is not capable of the contrary denomination, and therefore not liable, according to the tenor of this Law, to be punished as an Infidel, an impenitent person, an Enemy, a Rebel.

When it enjoins the latter, viz. all the subsequent duty, through the whole course whereof the already sincere soul must be tending towards perfection; though it bind not thereto under pain of damnation, further than as such neglects and miscarriages, may be so gross and continued, as not to consist with sincerity: Yet such injunctions are
not

not wholly without penalty; but here it obliges, under less penalties, the hiding of Gods face, and other paternal severities and castigations. They that thus only offend, are chastened of the Lord, that they may not be condemned with the world. Their iniquity is visited with the rod, and their transgression with stripes, though loving-kindness be not taken away—Yea, and while they are short of perfect holiness, their blessedness is imperfect also; which is to be acknowledged a very grievous penalty, but unconceivably short of what befalls them that are *simply unrighteous*. That it obliges thus diversly, is evident; for it doth not adjudge unto eternal death without remedy, for the least defect; for then what other Law should relieve against the sentence of this? or wherein were this a relieving Law? Yet doth it require perfection, that we perfect holiness in the fear of God; that we be perfect as our Father in heaven is perfect. And otherwise, did it bind to no other duty than what it makes simply necessary to salvation; the defects and miscarriages that consist with sincerity, were no sins, not being provided against by any Law that is of present obligation (unless we will have the *Law of Nature* to stand by it self as a distinct Law, both from *that of Works*, and of *Grace*; which is not necessary; but as it did at first belong to the former, so it doth now to the latter, as shall further be shewn by and by). For to suppose the Law of Works in its own proper form and tenor, to be still obliging,

1 Cor. 11.
Psal. 89.

2 Cor. 7. 1.
Mat. 5.

ging, is to suppose all under hopeless condemnation, inasmuch as all have sinned. And besides, it should oblige to cast off all regard to Christ, and to seek blessedness without him; yea, and it should oblige to a natural impossibility, to a contradiction, to make that not to have been, which hath been; a sinner to seek happiness by never having sinned. It cannot therefore intirely, in its own form, as it was at first made and laid upon man, be of present and continuing obligation to him. But in what part and respect it is, or is not, comes now more distinctly to be shewn. Here know, the Law of Nature, with fit Additionals, became one formed Constitution; which being violated by the Apostasie, became unuseful to the End it was made for, the containing of man within the bounds of such duty as should be conjunct with his blessedness. Therefore was the new Constitution of the Law of Grace made and settled, which alters, adds to, takes from it, relaxes, or re-enforces it, according as the matter of it, the exigency of man's case, and God's gracious purpose and design could admit, and did require.

For the promise (imply'd in the Threatning) it ceased; sin having disoblighd the Promiser.

For the Precept. The expressed positive part is plainly abrogate *. For the natural part: As it was not necessary, so nor was it possible it should be so; its foundations being more stable than Heaven and Earth.

For

For the Commination, we must understand two things in it : First, That for every transgression, a proportionable punishment must become due. Secondly, That this debt be in event exacted : or, that God do actually inflict the deserved penalty entirely and fully upon the offending person.

The former of these is in the strictest and most proper sense natural, and therefore also unalterable. This dunes arising immediately from the relation of a Reasonable creature offending, to his Maker. Whence also it is discernable to meer natural light. Pagans are said (*Rom. 1. 32.*) *to have known the righteous judgment of God, that they who commit such things (as are there mention'd) are worthy of death.* And hence was the mention and dread of a *Nemesis*, and an *ἔκδ'ιμορ ὀψικα* (a vindictive Deity, and a revengeful eye over them) so frequent with them. "If therefore (as the Learned *Grotius* speaks) there had never been a penal Law ; yet an human act, having in it self a pravity, whether intrinsecal, from the immutable nature of the thing ; or even extrinsecal, from the contrary command of God, had deserved punishment, and that very grievous. Now what an arbitrary Constitution did not create, it could not nullifie ; but might add strength, and give a confirmation to it.

But now for the latter, *That this debt be entirely and fully exacted of the sinner himself ;* though that be also natural, yet not in the strictest and most proper sense, *i. e.* It is convenient

*De Satisf.
cap. 3.*

Grot. *ibid.*

venient and agreeable to the nature of the thing; not what it doth so necessarily require, that it can upon no terms be dispens'd with. It is so natural, as that the Son inherit from his Father, which yet may, sometimes, for just causes be ordered otherwise. It is what, if it were done, Justice could not but approve: not what it doth strictly and indispensably require. Or, is a debt which it might exact, but which may, without injustice, upon valuable considerations be remitted. The former of these, therefore, the new Constitution doth no way infringe or weaken, but confirm and reinforce. The latter it so far dispenses with, as that, for the satisfaction made by the Redeemer, the debt incurred by sin, be remitted to the sinner that truly repents and believes, and continues sincerely (though imperfectly) to obey for the future.

So that his after-delinquencies, consisting with such sincerity, do not actually, or in event, subject him to other penalties, than the paternal rebukes and chastenings before-mentioned. But this latter part considerable in the Commination, *The determination of the full penalty, to the very person of the transgressor:* It doth not dispense with to others (i.e. of the adult, and of persons in a present natural possibility of understanding the Law-giver's pleasure herein) than such before described; but says expressly, *He that believeth not the Son, shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him: That indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, shall be upon every*

Joh. 3. 36.
Rom. 2.
8, 9.

every soul of man that doth evil.—

Therefore the morally-preceptive part of the Law of Works, is not in force *as man's rule of duty*, considered in conjunction with the promise: That is, it doth not now say to any Man, *Do this* (i.e. perfectly obey without ever having sinned) *that thou mayest live*. (Both which he was obliged to eye conjunctly; the former, as containing the *Rule*; the other the *End*, in part, of his obedience). But it is in force (even by the new Constitution it self) as *God's Rule of Judgment* (considered in conjunction with the *Communion*) upon all whom the Law of Grace relieves not, as not coming up to the terms of it; whom also this supervening Law brings under a supervening aggravated condemnation. For where the obligation to obedience is violated, the obligation to punishment naturally takes place. We see then how far the Law of Works is in force, and how far not.

But that so far as it is in force, it is to be looked on as taken into the New Constitution of the Law of Grace, is evident. For it is new modifi'd, and hath received a new mould and stamp by this Law: Which is now become (so far as it is promulgate) the standing Rule of Government over the laps'd World. The principal modifying act herein, is *Dispensation*. Now this, 'tis true, may be so understood, or may be taken in such a sense, as wherein it will only belong to the executive part of Government; that is, when it is not

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the act of the same Power that made the Law: As where only the execution of a deserved penalty is dispens'd with, which may be done, in some cases, by a Judg, that is only a Minister of the Law, and not the Maker of it; being (as may be supposed) enabled thereto by that Law it self, or by an Authority annexed to his Office; or by virtue of instructions, which leave to him some latitude of managing the Affairs of his Judicature in a discretionary way, as present occasions shall dictate. And yet by none of these would any change be made in the Law; but this is Dispensation in a less proper sense.

Vid. *Sua-*
res de Le-
gibus.

In the proper and more famous sense, Dispensation belongs to the Legislative part of Government, being the act of the same Power that made the former Law, now dispens'd with; and an act of the same kind, *viz.* Legislation; the making of a new Law that alters the former which it hath relation to: Whence it was wont to be reckon'd among those things that make a change in a Law*. And so the case is here: The former Law is dispens'd with by the making of a new one; which so alters and changes it in its matter and frame, and more immediate End, as hath been shewn: And a changed Law is not the same.

Nor is it at all strange, that the minatory part of the Law of Works related to the preceptive, so as with it to constitute the *debt of punishment*, should be now within the

the compass of the Redeemer's Law. For by this appli'd, and urged on the Consciences of sinners, he performs a necessary preparatory part of his work for their recovery, viz. the awakening, the humbling them; and reducing them to a just and useful despair of relief and help, otherwise than by his merciful hand and vouchsafement; and the rendring them hereby capable of his following applications. Cutting or lancing, with other such severities, are as proper and useful a part of the Chyrurgeon's business, as the applying of healing Medicines: Nor have they the same design and end for which wounds are inflicted by an Enemy, the taking away of life, but the saving of it. And the matter is out of doubt, that the most rigorous determination of the *penalty* that shall be understood *duly belonging to the least sin*, hath a place, and doth stand visibly extant to view in the publicly avow'd Declaration, and among the *Placita* or *Decretals* of the Redeemer. We there read, that whosoever shall say to his brother, *fool*, shall be in danger of hell fire (yea, and that lower degrees of the same kind of sin, do expose to lower degrees of the same kind of punishment, as our Saviour's words must be understood, if we attend the plain meaning of his allusive and borrowed phrase of speech). That the wages of sin is death. That as many as are of the works of the Law, are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of

Mat. 5. 22.

Ro. 6. 23.

Gal 3. 10.

Ver. 22.

* σω-
κλειστεν.
ibid.

the law to do them. And we are told, that *the Scripture* (which is the word of Christ, and was written not for innocent, but lapsed man) *hath concluded all under sin.* Where also we find what is the true intent and end of this rough and sharp dealing with men, The shutting them up, like sentenced Malefactors, as in order to execution (which seems to be the import of the word here used *) viz. *that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe* (or to them believing, as the words may be read). And moreover the Spirit, which breathes not in the Law of Works, as such, but in the Law of Grace, performs that operation which belongs to it, as it hath the name of the Spirit of Bondage, by applying and binding on the sentence of death, as due to the guilty person.

Therefore we must understand the Redeemer's Constitution to have two parts: 1. An assertion and establishment of the ancient determined penalty due for every transgression; and to be certainly inflicted on all such as accept not the following offer of Mercy upon the terms prescribed. Whereby the Honour and Justice of the Creator is saved and vindicated, in reference to that first Covenant made with man. And the case of the sinner is plainly stated before him, that he may have a distinct and right apprehension of it. 2. The Grant of Pardon and eternal life to those that repent unfeignedly of their sins, and turn to God; believing in the Mediator,

diator, and resigning themselves to his Grace and Government, to be by him conducted, and made acceptable to God in their return, and that continue sincere herein to the end. Whereby the wonderful mercy of God in Christ is demonstrated, and the Remedy is provided and ascertained to the, otherwise, lost and hopeless sinner.

And these two parts therefore are to be lookt on in this Constitution, though distinctly, yet not separately. The sinner is, at once to consider the same penalty as naturally, and by divine sanction, due to him; but now graciously to be remitted: The same blessedness as justly lost, but mercifully to be restored, with an high improvement. And to own both these jointly, as the voice of the Redeemer in his Gospel. Death is due to thee; Blessedness forfeited by thy having sinned: But if thou sincerely repent, believe and obey for the future, thou art pardoned, and entitled to everlasting life.

It therefore now appears, that as the Law or dictates of pure Nature, comprehended together with other fit additional, became at first one entire Constitution aptly suited to the government of man in his innocent state, unto which the Title did well agree of *the Law or Covenant of Works*: So the same natural dictates, transcribed and made express (because now sullied, and not so legible in the corrupted nature of man), do, with such allays and additions as the case required, compose and make up the Constitution

The Blessedness of the Righteous.

tution which bears the title of *the Law* or *Covenant of Grace*, or the *Law of Faith*, or *the Gospel of Christ*, and is only suitable to the state of man lapsed and fallen; as the measure of that righteousness which he is now to aim at, and aspire unto.

The rule of this Righteousness therefore being evidently *the Law of Faith*, the Gospel-revelation, wherein it is preceptive of duty: This Righteousness can be understood to be nothing but the impress of the Gospel upon a man's heart and life. A conformity in Spirit and Practice to the Revelation of the Will of God in Jesus Christ; a collection of Graces exerting themselves in suitable actions and deportments towards God and man; *Christ formed in the soul, or put on; the new creature in its being and operations; the truth learned as it is in Jesus, to the putting off the old man, and the putting on the new.*

More distinctly, we may yet see wherein it lies, upon a premised view of some few things necessary to be fore-known in order thereunto. As,

That this righteousness is a *renewing righteousness*, or the righteousness of one formerly a sinner, a lapsed perishing wretch, who is by it restored into such a state towards God, as he was in before that lapse (in respect of certain *great essentials*, though as yet his state be not so perfectly good, while he is in his tendency and motion; And shall, by certain *additional*s, be unspeakably better, when he hath attained the end and rest he is tending to).

That

That a reasonable Creature, yet untainted with sin, could not but have a temper of mind suitable to such apprehensions as these, *viz.* That as it was not the Author of being to it self, so it ought not principally to study the pleasing and serving of it self, but Him who gave it being; that it can no more continue and perfect it self unto blessedness, than it could create it self; and can therefore have no expectation hereof, but from the same Author of its being; and hence, that it must respect and eye the great God, its Creator and Maker: as,

The { Sovereign Authority whom it was
to fear and obey.
Sovereign Good whom it was to
love and enjoy.

But because it can perform no *duty* to him, without knowing what he will have it to *do*; nor have any particular expectation of favours from him, without knowing what he will please to *bestow*; and is therefore obliged to attend to the revelations of his Will concerning both these: It is therefore necessary, that he eye him under a notion introductive and subservient to all the operations that are to be exerted towards him, under the two former notions; *i. e.* as the *Eternal never-failing Truth*, safely to be depended on, as intending nothing of deceit in any the revelations, whether of his *righteous Will*, concerning matter of *duty to be done*; or of his

good Will, concerning matter of benefit to be expected and enjoined.

That Man did apostatize and revolt from God, as considered under these several notions; and returns to him, when an holy rectitude is recovered, and he again becomes righteous, considered under the same.

That it was not agreeable to God's Wisdom, Truth, and Legal Justice, to treat with Man a *Sinner* in order to his recovery, but through a Mediator; and that therefore he was pleased in wonderful mercy to constitute and appoint his own Son Jesus Christ, *God-man*, unto that Office and Undertaking; that through him, man might return and be reconciled to himself, whom he causelessly forsook; designing that he shall now become so affected towards himself, through the Mediator; and firstly therefore towards the Mediator's own Person, as he was before, and ought to have been towards himself immediately.

Therefore, whereas God was considerable in relation to Man, both in his Innocency and Apostacy, under that fore-mentioned two-fold notion of the supream

} Authority.
} Goodness.

He hath also set up and exalted our Lord Jesus Christ, and represented him to sinners under an answerable two-fold notion of a

} Prince
} Saviour.

e. e. A Mediating Prince and Saviour to give repentance first; to bow and stoop the hearts of sinners, and reduce them to a subject posture

future again, and then by remission of sins to restore them to favour, and save them from the wrath to come. Him hath the Father cloth'd with his own Authority, and fill'd with his Grace; requiring sinners to *submit* themselves to his *ruling power*, and *commit* themselves to his *saving mercy*; now both lodg'd in this his Son: To pay *him immediately* all homage and obedience, and through him *ultimately* to himself; from him *immediately* to expect salvation and blessedness, and through him *ultimately* from himself.

That whereas the spirits of men are not to be wrought to this temper, but by the intervention of a *discovery* and *revelation* of the Divine will to this purpose; Our Lord Jesus Christ is further appointed by the Father to reveal all this his counsel to sinners: And is eminently spoken of in Scripture upon this account, under the notion of *the Truth*; in which capacity he more effectually recommends to sinners both his *authority* and his *grace*. So that his threefold (so much

celebrated) Office of { King,
Priest,
Prophet,

(the distinct parts of his general Office as Mediator) which he manages in order to the reducement of lost sinners, exactly correspond (if you consider the more eminent acts and properties of each Office) to that threefold notion under which the Spirit of Man must always have eyed and been acted towards God, had he never fallen: and hence
this

The Blessedness of the Righteous.

this righteousness, which consists in conformity to the Gospel, is the former righteousness, *which was lost*; with such an accession as is necessary, upon consideration that it was lost, and was only to be recovered by a Mediator.

Therefore you may now take this short, and as compendious an account as I can give of it, in what follows.

It includes so *firm and understanding an assent* to the truth of the whole Gospel-Revelation, as that the soul is thereby brought, through the power of the Holy Ghost, sensibly to apprehend its former *disobedience* to God, and *distance* from him, the *reasonableness* of subjection to him, and *desirableness* of blessedness in him; the *necessity* of a Redeemer to reconcile and recover it to God; the accomplishments and designation of the Lord Jesus Christ to that purpose: And hence, a *penitent and complacential return* to God, as the *supream Authority*, and *sovereign Good*, an *humble and joyful acceptance* of our Lord Jesus Christ as its *Prince and Saviour*, with *submission* to his *Authority*, and *reliance* on his *Grace* (the exercise of both which are founded in his blood), looking and pitching upon *him*, as the only *medium*, through which he and his *duties* can *please* God, or God and his Mercies *approach* him; and through which he hath the confidence to venture upon a Covenant-acceptance of God, and surrender of himself to him, afterward pursued to his uttermost, by a continued
course

course of living in his *fear and love*, in *obedience* to him, and *communion* with him *through the Mediator*, always, while he is passing the *time* of his pilgrimage *in this world*, groaning under remaining sin, and pressing after perfect holiness; with an earnest expectation (animating him to a persevering patience through all difficulties) of a blessed eternity *in the other world*.

That such a conformity to the Gospel should be expressed by the name of *Righteousness*, cannot seem strange to such as acquaint themselves with the language of the Scripture. That gracious frame which the Gospel (made effectual) impresses upon the soul, is the *Kingdom of God*, in the passive notion of it, his *Kingdom received*, and now actually come with power upon our spirits. And *this Kingdom* (sometimes also by an apt *Synecdoche* called *Judgment* in the same notion) is said to consist in *righteousness*; whence then result also, *Peace and joy in the Holy Ghost*. The same *holy impressions* and consequent operations are mentioned by the Apostle under the name of *fruits of righteousness*, wherewith he prays his *Philippians* might be filled. It was *Elymas's* opposition to the Gospel, that stigmatized him with that brand, *Thou enemy of all righteousness*. To yield our selves servants to *righteousness*, in opposition to a former servitude to *sin*, is obeying from the heart the *Doctrine* of the Gospel, *into the type or mould whereof we have been cast or delivered*. And sure, both the *seal* and the *impression*, God's revelation, and

Rom. 14.
17.

Phil. 1. 11.

Rom. 6. 17.

and holiness (however now more explicite and distinctly conspicuous in all their parts) are the same, with us *substantially*, and in *David's* time ; whence we need make no difficulty to own this *latter*, when we meet with it, as here, under the same name.

By what hath hitherto been said, it may be already seen in part, how exactly this *righteousness* corresponds to the blessedness for which it qualifies ; whereof we shall have occasion hereafter to take further notice. In the mean time, it will be requisite to shew (which was promised to be done in the next place)

2. *How it qualifies.* To which I say (very briefly) that it qualifies for this blessedness two ways :

1. *Legally*, or in *genere Morali*, as it describes the Persons, who by the Gospel-grant have, alone, title thereunto. — *The Righteous into life eternal.* — *The unrighteous shall not inherit the Kingdom of God.* Say to the *righteous*, it shall be well with them. *The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him.* — *In his righteousness he shall live.* In which last words, how this righteousness conduceth to life, is exprest by the same Preposition as in the Text. In this kind it is not at all causal of this blessedness, but 'tis that which the free, and wise, and holy Law-giver thought meet, by his settled Constitution (besides what necessity there is of it upon another account) to make requisite thereto. The conformity of our Lord Jesus Christ to that
severer

Mat. 25.

1 Cor. 6.

Isa. 3.

Ezek. 18.

severer Law, under which he is said to have been made, is that which alone causes, merits, purchases this blessedness; which yet is to be enjoyed, not by all *indiscriminatum*, or without distinction, but by such alone, as come up to the terms of the *Gospel*; as he did fully satisfy the strict exactions of that other rigid Law, by doing and suffering for their sakes.

2. *Naturally, or in genere Physico.* In this kind it may be said to be some way causal, that is, to be a *causa materialis dispositiva*, by a proper positive influence, disposing the subject unto this blessedness, which that it *shall*, yet, enjoy, is wholly to be resolved into the Divine good pleasure, but it is put by this holy rectitude in that temper and posture that it *may* enjoy it, through the Lord's gracious vouchsafement; when without it, 'twere naturally impossible that any should. An unrighteous impure soul, is in a natural indisposition to *see God, or be blessed in him*. That depraved temper averts it from him, the steady bent of its will is set another way, and 'tis a contradiction that any (*in sensu composito*) *should* be happy against their wills, *i. e.* while that aversion of will yet remains. The unrighteous banish themselves from God, they shun and hate his presence. Light and darkness cannot have communion. The Sun doth but shine, continue to be it self, and the darkness vanishes, and is fled away. When God hath so determined, that only *the pure in heart shall see him*; that *without holiness none shall*; he

he lays no other Law upon unholy souls, than what their own impure natures lay upon themselves. If therefore it should be enquired, Why may not the unrighteous be subjects of this blessedness, *See God, and be satisfied with his likeness,* as well as the righteous? the question must be so answered, as if it were enquired, Why doth the wood admit the fire to pass upon it, suffer its flames to insinuate themselves till they have introduced its proper form, and turned it into their own likeness: but we see water doth not so, but violently resists its first approaches, and declines all commerce with it? The natures of these agree not. And is not the contrariety here as great. We have then the qualified subject of this blessedness, and are next to consider *this Blessedness it self.*

C H A P.

C H A P. III.

The nature of this Blessedness propounded unto consideration, in the three ingredients (here mentioned) whereof it consists. 1. Vision of Gods Face. 2. Assimilation to him. 3. The satisfaction resulting thence. These propounded to be considered, 1. Absolutely and singly each by it self. 2. Relatively, in their mutual respects to each other. The first of these, Vision of Gods Face, discours of. 1. The Object. 2. The Act.

NOW for the *Nature of this blessedness*, or the enquiry wherein it lyes, so far as the Text gives us any account of it, we are invited to turn our thoughts and discourse to it. And we have it here represented to us in all the particulars that can be supposed to have any nearer interest in the business of Blessedness, or to be more intimate and intrinsical thereunto.

For (the beatifick Object supposed) what more can be necessary to actual, compleat, formal blessedness, than *the sight of it, an adoption*

tion or assimilation to it, (which is nothing else but its being actually communicated and imparted to the soul, its being united and made as it were one with it) and the *comple-
cential fruition* the soul hath of it so commu-
nicated, or having so transformed it into its
self?

And these three are manifestly contained in the Text (the beatifick Object being invol-
ved with them) the first in the former clause,
I shall behold thy face ; the second and third in
the latter, *I shall be satisfied with thy likeness* ;
where, *being made like to God* hath been dis-
covered to be supposed ; and the *satisfaction*,
the pleasant contentful relishes consequent
thereto, plainly exprest.

We shall therefore have stated the entire
nature of this Blessedness in the handling of
these three things :

{ Vision of the Face of God.
 { Participation of his likeness.
 { Satisfaction therein.

And I shall chuse to consider them

1. *Absolutely*, and singly, each by it self.
2. *Relatively*, in the mutual respects (by
way of influence and dependance) they may
be found to have towards each other.

Therefore first, in the absolute consideration
of them severally, we begin with

*

First.

First, the Vision of God's Face, where

The { Object, The Face of God.
 { Act of seeing and beholding it, are
 distinctly to be spoken to.

1. *The Face of God* (the Object of this Vision), which is his glory represented, offered to view. And *this objected or exhibited glory* is twofold.

1. *Sensible*, such as shall incur and gratify (after the resurrection) the bodily eye.
2. *Intellectual, or intelligible*: that *spiritual glory* that only comes under the view and contemplation of the glorified mind.

1. A *sensible* glory (to begin with what is lower) is fitly in our way to be taken notice of, and may well be comprehended (as its less principal intendment) within the significance of the expression, *the Face of God*. So indeed it doth evidently signify, *Exod. 33. 11*. And if we look to the *notation* of the word, and its frequent use as applied to God, it may commodiously enough, and will often be found to signify, in a larger and more extended sense, any *aspect* or *appearance* of God. And though it may be understood *v. 23. of that Chapter*, to signify an overcoming spiritual glory, as the principal thing there

there intended, such as no soul dwelling in flesh could behold, without renting the vail, and breaking all to pieces; yet, even there also, may such a degree of sensible glory be secondarily intended, as it was not consistent with a state of Mortality to be able to bear.

And supposing the other expression [*Thy likeness*] to signifie, in any part, the *objective glory* Saints are to behold; it is very capable of being extended so far, as to take in a sensible appearance of glory also, which it doth in these words, *The similitude of the Lord shall be behold* (yet even that glory also was transformative and impressive of it self: *Moses* so long conversed with it, till he became uncapable, for the present, of converse with men, as you know the story relates).

Such a glory as this, though it belong not to the being of God, yet it may be some umbrage of him, a more shadowy representation, as a man's garments are of the man, which is the allusion in that of the *Psalmist*, *Thou art clothed with Majesty and Honour: Thou coverest thy self with [Light] as with a Garment.*

And inasmuch as that spiritual Body (*the House not made with hands*) wherewith the blessed are to be cloth'd upon, must then be understood to have its proper sensitive *Powers and Organs* refined to that degree, as may be agreeable to a state of Glory; so must these have their suitable *objects* to converse

Numb. 12.

8.

Ezek. 1.

28.

Exod. 34,

35, &c.

Psal. 104.

1, 2.

2 Cor. 5.1.

*Cui libet
potentie
active re-
spondet
passiva,
sive obje-
ctiva.*

The Blessedness of the Righteous.

51

verse with. A Faculty without an Object, is not possible in Nature, and is altogether inconsistent with a state of Blessedness. The bodies of Saints will be *raised in glory—fashioned like Christs glorious body*; must bear the image of the heavenly; and this will connaturalize them to a Region of Glory, render a surrounding sensible glory necessary and natural to them, their own element: they will, as it were, not be able to live but amidst such a glory. Place is conservative of the body placed in it, by its suitableness there. Indeed every created being (inasmuch as it is not self-sufficient, and is obliged to fetch in continual refreshings from without) must always have somewhat suitable to it self to converse with, or it presently languishes. By such an harmony of actives and passives, the world consists and holds together. The least defect thereof then, is least of all supposable in the state of blessedness.

Cor. 15.
3.
Phil. 3. 21.

The rays of such a glory have often shone down into this lower World. Such a glory we know shewed it self upon the Mount *Sinai*: afterwards often about the Tabernacle, and in the Temple: Such a glory appeared at our Saviours Birth, Baptism, and Transfiguration; and will do at his expected appearance; which leaves it, no unimaginable thing to us, and shews, how facile it is to God to (do that which will then be, in some sort necessary) create a glory meet for the entertainment and gratification of

The Blessedness of the Righteous.

any such faculty, as he shall then continue in being. But,

2. The *intellectual glory*, That which perfected Spirits shall eternally please themselves to behold; calls for our more especial consideration. This is the *glory that excelleth, hyperbolical glory*, (as that expression imports); such, as in comparison whereof, the other is said to be *no glory*: as the Apostle speaks, comparing the glory of the Legal with that of the Evangelical dispensation, where the former was, we must remember, chiefly a sensible glory, the glory that shone upon Mount *Sinai*; the latter a purely spiritual glory; and surely, if the meer preludes of *this glory*, the *primordia*, the beginnings of it, *The glory—yet shining but through a glass*, (as he there also speaks of this glory) were so *hyperbolically* glorious, what will it be in its highest exaltation, in its perfected state?

The Apostle cannot speak of that, but with *hyperbole upon hyperbole* in the next Chapter, as though he would heap up words as high as heaven to reach it, and give a just account of it.

Things are as *their next Originals*. This glory, more immediately rays forth from God, and more nearly represents him. 'Tis his more genuine production. He is stiled the *Father of Glory*: every thing that is glorious is some way like him, and bears his image. But he is as well the *Father of Spirits*, as the Father of Glory; and that glory, which is purely spiritual, hath most in it of his

καὶ βαλ-
λῶσιν
δύναμις.
2 Cor. 3.
10.

καθ' ὅσον
ἐκείνου
ἐκείνου
ἐκείνου.
2 Cor. 4.
17.

Eph. 1.

Heb. 12.

his nature and image : as beams but in the next descent from the body of the Sun. This is his unveiled face, and *emphatically*, the *divine likeness*.

Again, things are as the *Faculties* which they are to exercise and satisfy; this glory must exercise and satisfy the noblest faculty, of the most noble and excellent creature. Intellectual nature, in the highest improvement 'tis capable of in a creature, must here be gratified to the uttermost; the most enlarged contemplative power of an immortal Spirit finds that wherein it terminates here, with a most contentful acquiescence.

'Tis true it must be understood not totally to exceed the capacity of a creature, but it must fully come up to it. Should it quite transcend the Sphere of created nature, and surpass the model of an human understanding (as the Divine Glory undoubtedly would, did not God consider us in the manner of exhibiting it to our view) it would confound, not satisfy. A creature even in glory is still a Creature, and must be treated as such. After the blessed God hath elevated it to the highest pitch, he must infinitely condescend, it cannot otherwise know or converse with him. He must accommodate this glory to the weaker eye, the fainter and more languid apprehensions of a poor finite thing. I had almost said *nothing*, for what is any creature, yea, the whole creation in its best state, compared with the *I AM*, the *being* (as he justly appropriates to himself that name) the

Not being willing to trouble a discourse wholly of another nature and design with any thing of controversy.

All in All. We must be careful then to settle in our own thoughts such a state of this glory (in forming that indeterminate notion we have now of it) as may render it (though confessedly above the measure of our present understandings as to a distinct knowledge of it) not manifestly incompetent to any created understanding whatsoever, and as may speak us *duly* shy of ascribing a Deity to a worm, of affixing any thing to the creature, which shall be found agreeing to the blessed God himself alone. Their expressions therefore, who over-magnifie (even Deifie) the creature assumed into glory, must be heard and read with caution and abhorrency, as the high-swelling words of blasphemous vanity. Is it not enough that perishing wretches, that were within one hands breadth of Hell, are saved, except they be also Deified too? that they become *happy*, unless they also become *Gods*? The distance even of a glorified creature from the glorious God, is still infinitely greater, than between it and the silliest worm, the minutest atome of dust.

I have chosen only to annex a marginal digression, wherein somewhat to animadvert upon the over bold disputes and definitions of the Scholastick generation, touching what we have now under consideration. Some of whose Writings seem the very Springs of the putid conceits (there not wanting those, that are officious enough to serve the illiterate, in accommodating things of that kind to their genius and language) so greedily imbib'd by modern Enthusiasts.

'Tis a Question much agitated among the School-men,

And

And by how much more we shall then know of *his* glory, so much more shall we understand *that* distance. Yet as he shall then enlarge the capacity of the soul he glorifies, to a very vast comprehension, so shall

Whether the Divine Essence be exhibited to the view of

the Blessed in Heaven, in it self immediately, or by the intervention of any created likeness or similitude?

Had it been agreed to forbear looking within this veil (the rude attempt whereof, rather rents than draws it aside) and to shut up all discourse of this kind, in a modest awful silence ; or had the Adventures some have made been foolishly only, not pernicious, this present labour had been spared. But when Men speak of things above their reach, not to no purpose barely, but to very bad ; what they say ought to be considered. The Divine Essence, say the Thomists (and the Scotists here disagree not) is it self immediately united to the intellect of the blessed [*in ratione Speciei intelligibilis*] so as there is no place for any intervening likeness, or representation. *Ipsa Divina Essentia est, que videtur & quo videtur.* Thom. Sum. primâ parte, q. 12, Art. 2. 3. contr. Gentes c. 15. Now they assert concerning the Species intelligibiles, in general, that they have not, *Locum objecti, intellectionem terminantes* (which they make the place and office of the *verbum mentis per intellectionem productum*) but *forme tantum & actus primi*, and that the understanding so acts by them, as fire by its proper form, Thom. Sum. primâ parte, q. 85. Art. 2. (the contrary whereto is asserted by Scotus in 1. Sentent. distinct. 3. q. 6.) Yea, and Cajet. affirms 1 p. q. 76. Art. 2. That the Intellect and the intelligible species are more one than the matter and form in the *compositum*. For, saith he, (or to that purpose, nor having him now at hand) the matter is not turned into the form, nor *è contrâ*, but the intellect, which is in it self meer power, doth, in *genere intelligibili* turn into its very intelligible object ; and the intelligible objects it self is after a certain manner imbib'd in the intellect. So *Ledesma de Divin. perfect. q. 3. Art. 5. unum transit in aliud, ex quo sequitur, quod unum sit aliud.* And hence, say they, applying this doctrine to the present purpose, [*& secundum istum modum, in conjunctione illâ ineffabili divinæ essentie cum intellectu creato, fit unum agens integrum, scil. intellectus creatus factus Deus mi-*

abili mo-
do] [In-
tellectus in
visione be-
atifica, est
potentia
jam deifi-
cata, per
lumen
glorie,

the exhibition of his glory to it, be fully adequate to its most enlarged capacity. They are as yet but obscure glimmerings, we can have of this glory; But so far as, without too bold curiosity, we may, and wherein Scripture-light will give us any pre-apprehension of it, let us consider a while,

Cajet. primâ parte q. 12. Art. 2. ex Ledes. q. 8. Art. 8.] For besides this immediate union of the Divine Essence it self with the intellect they assert a *lumen glorie*, an accident super-added, without which the vision cannot be performed; which additional the *Scotists* reject. Some, though they admit it, think the vision may be without it, and that it doth not implicare contradictionem, visionem beatificam fieri sine lumine glorie, cum solo speciali Dei auxilio, quod item asserunt multi ex scholasticis, Palud. in 4. dist. 49. q. 1. Art. 3. Concl. 2. Thom. de Argent. q. 2. Art. 1. Major. q. 4. Henr. quolibet. 7. Zamel. 1. p. q. 12. Art. 5. disp. 2. concl. 3. Ita Onuphr. de virtute penitentia. Whether there be any *verbum creatum*, the product of intellection, the *Thomists* are themselves divided. Their more common opinion is, that there is none, as *Ledesma* assures us; telling us also his reason, why he conceives there can be none. *Beati non formant verbum in videndo Deo, sed plus vident quam verbo creato dicere possunt*—nam beatus per visionem beatam quamvis non videat [infinite] videt tamen infinitum—(which is their great argument against any intelligible species), and he further adds, sicut visio Dei, quæ est in ipso Deo, habet pro principio & specie intelligibili ipsam divinam Essentiam; & pro termino ipsam Divinam Essentiam: sic visio beatorum est ita supernaturalis, & divini ordinis, & participatio divine visionis ita perfecti, ut ipsa etiam habeat pro principio & specie intelligibili, divinam Essentiam, & pro termino sive verbo producto, ipsammet divinam Essentiam. So that the principle and term of this vision are own'd to be nothing else, but the simple Divine Essence. Concerning the formal act it self, it is much disputed, whether the creatures intellect do at all effectually concur to it, or whether God himself be not the only efficient or agent in this vision. Some stick not to affirm the latter, Marsil. in 3. q. 1. Palud. in 4. dist. 49. q. 1.

The

The { Nature } of it,
 { Excellency }

We cannot indeed consider these separately; for we can no sooner understand it to be *glory*, than we conceive it *excellent*: *Glory*, in the proper Notion of it, being nothing else but resplendent excellency, the lustre of excellency, or real worth made conspicuous. Yet as

and the superiour only acts; the same thing that D. M. *Causabon* in his Enthusiasm charges one *Maximus* with, who in a book entituled *κατάλαμα θεολογικόν* writes thus; *τὴν ἀμεσον λαβὼν ἔνωσιν πρὸς τὸν θεὸν ὁ νῦν τὴν τῶ νοεῖν καὶ νοεῖσθαι παντελῶς δύναμιν ἔχει χολᾶσθαι*. That the Soul taken into immediate union with God, loses all its knowing power (though this be not distinctively spoken of the state of glory): And what doth this amount to? but that while they are eagerly contending about the Saints blessedness, and too curiously labouring to explicate the manner of their seeing God, they unawares destroy the subject of the question, and deny that they see him at all; and so upon the whole, dispute themselves into a worse than Paganish infidelity. And even the rest, that agree in the sense of the passages above-recited, will not be easily able to avoid the charge of as intolerable consequences; which it is my business here only to discover, and not to determine any thing in this controversy, whiles I tax the too much boldness of others, who adventure it. And here not to insist on the absurdity of what they say concerning the intelligible species in general, let it be considered. 1. That the Divine Essence is said to be united to the intellect of the blessed, as an intelligible species. 2. That the intelligible species, in the business of intellection, and the intellect, become one another, do not remain distinct things united, but are identified. 3. That hence in understanding God, the intellect is deified and becomes God, which naturally follows from the two former, and is moreover expressly asserted in plain words. What need is there to press this Doctrine with hard consequences? or how can it look worse than it doth already, with its own natural face? Nor

Art. 2. (referente Ledesma) and say plainly, that the action of the inferior agent wholly ceases,

there

can I apprehend which way it should be made look better. For should it lay claim there is an excellency conceivable in the nature of it, that excellency whereof it is the splendor and brightness; so we must conceive a peculiar excellency of that very radiation, that splendor it self, wherewith it shines unto blessed souls. *In its very nature it is the brightness of Divine excellencies*: in its *present appearance*, it shines in the highest to that favour, to be understood according to the usual sense of the peripaterick maxim, *Intellectus, intelligendo, fit omnia*; it will be found manifestly to have precluded it self. That maxim is wont to be understood thus; that the intellect becomes that which it understands *representative*, by putting on the *species* or *likeness* of its Object, the representation of it. For instance, when I form in my mind the notion of a mountain, my understanding becomes an Ideal or spiritual mountain: it becomes that species (which is liable to more exception too then I shall now insist on, and looks more like the language of a Poet than a Philosopher) that is now formed there: and not the material mountain it self. But how shall this assertion [*The understanding, by its act of understanding God, becomes God*] be capable of that interpretation, i.e. It becomes his *likeness*, his *Idea*, his representation now formed in it, when any such intervening likeness or representation is utterly denied; and that supposed species is said to be the simple Divine essence it self? and if the Divine essence it self be that species by which 'tis understood, will it not follow from that other *Aristotelian* axiom (which with them must signifie as much as a Text from Saint Paul) *scibile & scientia sunt eadem*: That our very knowledg of God must be God too; or would they disown that maxim, sure when once the *faculty* is supposed deified, the *act* immanent in it, cannot be a created accident; nor can that maxim (understood of the *scibile representativum*, or the *species scibilis*) be denied by them: And sure, if the Saints *knowledg of God*, the likeness of him in their *mind* be God; their *holiness*, the likeness of him in their *hearts*, must be so too. How absurd then would it be, to use that Scripture-language, and speak of these under the names of Gods image or likeness, when *Similitude* and *Identity*, are notions so vastly disagreeing; and since a Saints knowledg and

excellency

excellency of that brightness; in its nature it excelleth all things else: in its present exhibition, compared with all its former radiations, it excelleth it self.

As to the nature of this Glory, 'tis nothing else but the conspicuous lustre of Divine perfections. We can only guide our present conceptions of it, by the discovery God hath already given us of himself, in those several excellencies of his Being, the great Attributes that are convertible and one with him. When Moses besought Him for a sight of his glory, he answers him with this, *I will proclaim my name before thee.* His Name, we know, is the collection of his Attributes.

holiness here and in heaven differ but in degree: they can be here on earth, nothing but God dwelling in them. And supposing that *Scotus* have better defended than his ad-

versaries impugned the real identity of the soul and its faculties, that must be deified too. However, what could be imagined more absurd, than that the substance of the soul should be a creature, and its faculty God? Whence then do we think that modern Familists have fetched their admired nonsense? Whom have they had their original Instructors? or who have taught them that brave magnificent language of being Godded with God, and Christed with Christ? but these? Nor sure need they blush to be found guilty of so profoundly learned inconsistencies, or to speak absurdly after such Patrons. And what should occasion these men so to involve themselves, I cannot find, or divine, more than this, that they were not able to fasten upon any more tolerable sense of the word *Kados*; 1 Cor. 13. 12. 1 Job. 3. 2. but taking that in its highest pitch of significancy; all their arguments are generally levelled at this mark, to prove that no created species can possibly represent God [*sicuti est*], and thence infer, that he cannot be seen by any created species in the glorified state, where he is to be seen *sicuti est*. But could we content our selves with a modest interpretation of these words, and understand them to speak not of a parity, but of a similitude only, be-

tween
God's
know-
ledg and
ours, nor
of an ab-
solute om-
nimodous
similitude,
but com-
parative
only; that

The notion therefore we can hence form of this glory, is only such as we may have of a large Volume by a brief Synopsis or Table; of a magnificent Fabrick, by a small Model or Platform; a spacious Country, by a little Landskip. He hath here given us a *true* representation of himself, not a *full*: such as will secure our apprehensions, being guided thereby, from *error*, not from *ignorance*. So is, that comparing our *future* with our *present* state, the *former* shall so far excel *this*, that in comparison thereof, it may be said to be a knowing of God, *as we are known*, and *as he is*; in so much as our future knowledg of him, shall approach so unspeakably nearer to his most perfect knowledg of us, and the truth of the thing, than our present knowledg doth or can; by such an interpretation we are cast upon no such difficulties. For admit that no species can represent God *as he is*, in the highest sense of these words; yet sure, in the same sense wherein he can be *seen* by us *as he is*, he may be *represented* to us *as he is*. And what can be more frivolous than that fore-recited reasoning to the contrary? "*There can be no created representation of God [sicuti est.] adequate to the Vision the blessed have of him; but they see more than any created representation can contain; for they see infinitum, though not infinité.* For how must we understand the *infinitum* they are said to see? Materially, or formally? Must we understand by it him that is infinite only, or as he is infinite? If it be said the *latter*, that is to say, they see *infinite* too: If the *former* only; Do not Saints on earth see (*viz.* mentally, which is the Vision we are speaking of) him who is infinite, in their present state, where it is acknowledged the knowledg is by *species*.

Yet would I not hence conclude, that the knowledg Saints shall have of God hereafter, shall be by *species*; for my design in all this is but to discover the vanity of too positive and definitive conceptions concerning it, beyond the measure of Gods Revelation, and the ducture of clear and unintangled Reason. All knowledg hath been thought to be by assimilation, *i. e.* by receiving the *species* or images of the things known. So the

as they *swerve* not in apprehending this glory, though they still *fall short*. We can now apply our minds to contemplate the several perfections which the blessed God assumes to himself, and whereby he describes to us his own Being; and can in our thoughts *attribute* them all to him, though we have still but low defective conceptions of each one. As if we could at a distance distinguish the Streets and Houses of a great City; but every one appears to us much less than it is. We can apprehend somewhat of whatsoever he reveals to be in himself; yet when all is done,

intellect is not really turned into the things which it understands, but only receives their *species*, where-with it is united to closely, that it is

therefore said to be [*like*] to them. *Virtuosi of France*, Confer. 65.

One way or other it hath been judged necessary the mind should be furnished with such images of the thing it is said to understand; which therefore some have thought *connate*; others, supplied by sense totally; others, by a separate *intellectus Agens*; which some have thought to be God himself: others, one common Intelligence: others, a particular Genius. So indispensably necessary it hath been reckon'd unto intellection, that the office of furnishing the mind with the images of the things to be understood, should be performed by one or other. If any clearer explication can be given, or better way assigned of the Souls knowing things, it cannot but be welcome to rational men. But I see no necessity or reason it should have a specifically distinct way of knowing here and in Heaven. Much less that we should imagine to our selves such a one, as to that other state, as is altogether unaccountable and capable of no rational explication; and reckon it much more *becoming* to be silent, than on pretence of any mystery in the things we discourse of, to talk absurdly and unintelligibly about them. A confessed ignorance in this case is *becoming*, to say with that great Apostle, *It doth not appear what we shall be*: But to conclude and define such matters, is surely *αγορεύειν τὰ μυστήρια τοῦ Θεοῦ*.

how

how little a portion do we take up of him ! Our thoughts are empty and languid, strait and narrow, such as diminish and limit the Holy One. Yet so far as our apprehensions can correspond to the discovery he affords us of his several Excellencies, we have a present view of the Divine Glory. Do but strictly and distinctly survey the many Perfections comprehended in his Name, then gather them up, and consider how glorious he is ! Conceive *one* glory resulting from substantial Wisdom, Goodness, Power, Truth, Justice, Holiness, that is, beaming forth from him who is all these *by his very Essence, necessarily, originally, infinitely, eternally*, with whatsoever else is truly a Perfection. This is the glory blessed Souls shall behold for ever.

2Pet. I. 17. *For the excellency of it, 'tis called by way of discrimination, The excellent glory.* There was glory put upon Christ in the transfiguration ; of which, when the Apostle speaks, having occasion to mention withal *the glory of heaven it self*, from whence the voice came ; he adds to this latter, the distinguishing note of *the excellent* : He himself was eye-witness of the Honour, and Majesty, and Glory, which the Lord Jesus then received ; but beyond all this, the glory from whence the voice came, was the *excellent* or *stately* glory, as the word imports.

Μεγαλο-
πρεπής,

1 Pet. 4. 13. 'Tis a great intimation how *excellent* a glory this is, that 'tis said to be a glory *yet to be revealed* ; as if it had been said, *Whatever appearances of the Divine Glories are now*

now offered to your view, there is still somewhat undiscovered, somewhat behind the Curtain that will outshine all. You have not seen so much, but you are still to expect unspeakably more.

Glory is then to shine in its Noon-day strength and vigour: 'Tis then in its Meridian. *Here, the riches of glory* are to be displayed, certain Treasures of Glory, the plenitude and magnificence of glory. We are *here to see him as he is*; to know him as we are known of him. Certainly, *the display of himself*, the rays of his discovered excellency, must hold proportion with that *Vision*, and be therefore exceeding glorious. *'Tis the glory Christ had with the Father before the foundations of the world were laid*; into the vision and communion whereof holy souls shall now be taken, according as their capacities can admit; that wherewithal his great achievements and high merits shall be rewarded eternally; that wherewith he is to be glorified in Heaven, in compensation of having glorified his Father on earth, and finished the work whereto he was appointed. This cannot but be a most transcendent glory. 'Tis in sum, and in the language of the Text, the glory of *Gods own face*, his most aspectable, conspicuous glory. Whose transforming beams are productive of the *glory imparted*; the next ingredient into this blessedness, which will presently come to be spoken of, after we have given you some short account of,

John 17.

2. *The*

2. *The Act of beholding* : the *vision* or *intuition* it self, by which intervening the impression is made.

Glory seems to carry in it a peculiar respect to the *visive power* (whether corporal or mental, as it is it self of the one kind or the other); 'tis something to be *contemplated*, to be lookt upon. And being to transmit an *impression*, and consequent *pleasure* to another subject, it must necessarily be so, it can neither *transform* nor *satisfie*, but as it is beheld.

And here the *sensitive intuition* I shall not insist on, as being less intended in the Text, and the discourse of it less suitable to such as with a spiritual mind and design set themselves to enquire into the nature of the Saints blessedness. Yet, as *this* is the most noble, comprehensive, quick, and sprightly *sense*, so is the *Act* of it more considerable, in the matter of blessedness, than any other of the outward-man, and the most perfect imitation of the act of the mind; whence also *this* so often borrows the name of the *other*, and is called *seeing*. 'Tis an act indeed very proper and pertinent to a state of glory. By how much more any sensible object is glorious (supposing the *sensorium* to be duly disposed and fortified, as must be here supposed), so much is it the fitter object of *Sight*; hence when we would express a glorious object, we call it *conspicuous*; and the less glorious, or more obscure any thing is, and the less visible it is, and the nearer it approaches to invisibility; whence
that

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that saying in the common Philosophy, *To see blackness is to see nothing.*

*Arist. in
3. Meteorolog. Cap.
de Iride.*

Whatsoever a glorified eye, replenished with a heavenly vitality and vigor, can fetch in from the many glorified objects that encompass it, we must suppose to concur to this blessedness. Now is the eye *satisfied with seeing*, which before never could.

But, 'tis intellectual sight we are chiefly to consider here, that, whereby we see him that is invisible, and approach the *inaccessible Light*. The word here used, some Critics tell us, more usually signifies the sight of the mind. And *then*, not a casual, superficial glancing at a thing, but *contemplation*, a studious, designed viewing of a thing, when we solemnly compose and apply ourselves thereto; or the vision of Prophets, or such as have things discovered to them by divine Revelation, (thence called *Chozim* Seers) which imports (though not a previous design, yet) no less intention of mind in the act it self.

הנה

And so it more fitly expresses that knowledge which we have, not by discourse and reasoning out of one thing from another, but by immediate intuition of what is nakedly, and at once offered to our view, which is the more proper knowledge of the blessed in Heaven. They shall have the glory of God so presented, and their minds so enlarged, as to comprehend much at one view; in which respect they may be said, in a great degree, *to know as they are known*.

in as much as the blessed God comprehends all things at once, in one simple act of knowing. Yet that is not to be understood as if the state of glory should exclude all *ratiocination*, more than our present state doth all *intuition*, (for first and indemonstrable principles we see by their own light, without illation or argument); nor can it be inconvenient to admit, that while the knowledge the blessed have of God is not infinite, there may be use of their discursive faculty with great fruit and pleasure. Pure intuition of God, without any mixture of reasoning, is acknowledged (by such as are apt enough to be over-ascribing to the creature) peculiar to God alone. But as the blessed God shall continually afford (if we may speak of continuity in Eternity, which yet we cannot otherwise apprehend) a clear discovery of himself, so shall the principal exercise, and felicity of the blessed soul consist in that less laborious and more pleasant way of knowing, a meer admitting or entertaining of those free beams of voluntary light, by a grateful intuition; which way of knowing, the expression of *sight*, or *beholding*, doth most incline to, and that is, we are sure, the ordinary language of Scripture about this matter.

Cognoscere
Deum clarè & intuitivè est proprium & naturale soli Deo, sicut est proprium igni calcare & soli illuminare.
Ledesim.
de divin.
perfect.
q. 8. Art.
7.
Matt. 5. 8.
Heb. 12.
14.

CHAP. IV.

The second Ingredient into this Blessedness considered, Assimilation to God, or his Glory imprest: wherein it consists, discovered in sundry Propositions. The third Ingredient, The Satisfaction and Pleasure which results, stated and opened.

AND now, upon this Vision of the blessed Face of God, next follows, in the order of discourse, The Souls perfect *assimilation* unto that revealed Glory, or its participation thereof, (touching the order the things themselves have to one another, there will be consideration had in its proper place), and this also must be considered as a distinct and necessary ingredient into the state of blessedness we are treating of.

Distinct it is, for though the Vision now spoken of, doth include a certain kind of assimilation in it, as all Vision doth, being only a reception of the species or likeness of the Object seen: This assimilation we are to speak of, is of a very different kind. *That*, is such as affects only the visive or cognitive power, and that not with a *real* change, but *intentional* only, nor for longer continuance than the act of Seeing lasts; but *this* is *total, real, and permanent*.

And surely it is of equal necessity to the Souls blessedness, to *partake* the Glory of God, as to *behold* it; as well to have the divine likeness *imprest* upon it, as *represented* to it. After so contagious and over-spreading a depravation as sin hath diffus'd through all its powers, it can never be happy without a change of its very *crasis* and temper throughout. A diseased ulcerous body would take little felicity in gay and glorious sights: no more would all the glory of Heaven signify to a sick, deformed, self-loathing Soul.

It must therefore be all glorious within, have the Divine Nature more perfectly communicated, the likeness of God transfus'd and wrought into it. This is the blessed work begun in Regeneration; but how far it is from being perfected, we may soon find by considering, how far short we are of being satisfied in our present state, even in the contemplation of the highest and most excellent Objects. How tasteless to our Souls are the thoughts of God! How little pleasure do we take in viewing over his glorious Attributes! the most acknowledged and adorable excellencies of his Being! And whereto can we impute it but to this, that our spirits are not yet sufficiently connaturalized to them? Their likeness is not enough deeply instamped on our Souls. Nor will this be, *till we awake*; When we see better, we shall become better: *When he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.*

But

But do we indeed pretend to such an expectation? Can we think what God is, and what we are in our present state, and not confess these words to carry with them an amazing sound, *we shall be like him!* How great an hope is this! How strange an errand hath the Gospel into the world! How admirable a design! to transform men and make them like God! Were the dust of the earth turned into stars in the firmament, were the most stupendious poetical transformations assured *realities*; what could equal the greatness and the wonder of this mighty change? Yea, and doth not the expectation of it seem as presumptuous, as the issue it self would be strange? Is it not an overbold desire? too daring a thought? a thing *unlawful* to be *affected*, as it seems *impossible* to be *attained*?

It must be acknowledged there is an appearance of high arrogance in aspiring to this, *to be like God*. And the very wish or thought of being so, *in all respects*, were not to be entertained without horreur: 'Tis a matter therefore that requires some disquisition and explication, wherein that impressed likeness of God consists, which must concur to the Saints blessedness. In order hereunto then take the following Propositions:

1. *There is a sense wherein to be like God is altogether impossible, and the very desire of it the most horrid wickedness.* The Prophet in the name of God charges the proud Prince

Verse 6.

7.

8.

9.

10.

Deut. 32.

21.

of Tyre with this, as an inexpressible arrogance that he did *set his heart as the heart of God*, and upon this score challenges and enters the lists with him: Come, you that would fain be taken for a God, I'll make a sorry God of thee e're I have done; *Because thou hast set thy heart as the heart of God*, I'll set those upon thee, that shall draw their Swords against the *beauty of thy wisdom*, and that shall defile thy *brightness*; And what? *Wilt thou yet say in the hand of him that slayeth thee, I am a God? Thou shalt be a man, and no God, in the hand of him that slayeth thee;—I have spoken it saith the Lord God.* He will endure no such imitation of him, as to be rival'd in the point of his *Godhead*. This is the matter of his jealousy; *They have moved me to jealousy with not-God* (so 'tis shortly and more smartly spoken in the Original Text). And see how he displays his threats and terrors hereupon in the following verses. This was the *design* and *inducement* of the first transgression, *to be as Gods*. And indeed all sin may be reduced hither; What else is sin (in the most comprehensive notion) but *an undue imitation of God*? an exalting of the *Creatures Will* into a supremacy, and opposing it as such to the *divine*? *To sin*, is to take upon us, as if we were supream, and *that there were no Lord over us*; 'Tis to assume to our selves a Deity, as if we were under no Law or Rule; as he is not under any, but what he is to himself. Herein, to be like God, is the very core and malignity of sin.

2. There

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2. *There is a just and laudable imitation of God*, a likeness to him, that is matter of *command, praise, and promise*, as wherein both the *duty, excellency and blessedness* of the reasonable Creature doth consist; and which is in some respect inseparable from the nature of man. We are *required* to be followers of God, as dear Children (imitators the word is). *David* is commended *as a man after Gods own heart* (though but now, we saw in another, with what disdain and indignation it was resented, that he did set his heart, as the heart of God). The *new Creature*, the *new Man*, the first fruits, (as he is called) the flower of the Creation, is made after God. Saints expect, upon the assurance of his word, to be more fully *like him*, as we see in the text, and parallel places. Yea, man was made at first with a concreate similitude to God, which we know was the counsel of Heaven, and the result and issue of that counsel, *Gen. 1. 26, 27*. This is evident enough in it self, and needs no more words. But to make a further step in this business, observe next,

3. *There can be no allowable imitation of any one, but with an exception, as to some peculiarities that may belong to his special station, relation, and other circumstances of the condition in which he is; or with limitation to such things as are of common concernment unto both.* 'Tis commonly observed, how naturally a people form their manners and fashions to the example of the Prince; and

2.

Eph. 1. 5.
imitat.

Jam. 1. 18.
Eph. 4.
24.

3.

Regis ad
exemplum
totius com-
ponitur
orbis.

* Nam fa-
cere recte
bonus
princeps
faciendo
docet.

Cumque sit
imperio
maximus,
exemplo
major est.
Velleius
Patercu-
lus, Rom
Hist. l. 2.

there is no well-disposed Ruler, but would take it well; to be imitated in things that are of common concernment to him and his subjects, that is, that concern him, *not as he is a King, but as he is a Man, or a Christian.* To behold the transforming power of his own example; where it is such as begets a fair and unreprouchful impress*; how *his* virtues circulate (his justice, temperance, love of Religion), and produce their likeness among his people; 'twill be a glory, and cannot but be resented with some *delight*. We cast an *honor* upon them whom we imitate: for we acknowledg an *excellency* in them (which is all that honouring imports in the first notion of it), and that *naturally* is received with pleasure. But now, should subjects aspire to a *likeness* to their Prince, in the proper appendages and acts of *Sovereignty*; and because he is a glorious King, they will be such too; and assume the peculiar cognizances of *Regalty*; ascend the Throne, sway the Scepter, wear the Crown, enact Laws, &c. There cannot be more of *dutifulness* and *observance* in the *former* imitation, than there is of *disloyalty* and *treason* in *this*. A Father is pleased, to have his Son imitate him, within such limits before-mentioned; but, if he will govern the Family, and fill up his room in all relations, this will never be endured.

4.
4.

4. There are some things to be found in the blessed God, not so incommunicable and appropriate, but that his Creatures may be said to have some

some participation thereof with him: and so far, to be truly like him. This participation cannot be *univocal*; as the nature of a living Creature in general, is equal in *Men* and *Brutes*; So, it is a self-evident Principle, that *Nothing can be common to God and an inferiour being*. Nor is it only an *equivocal*, a participation but of the same name, when the natures signified thereby are *altogether* diverse: But *analogical*, in as much as the things spoken, under the same names, of God and the creature, have a *real likeness*, and *conveniency in nature* with one another: and they are in God, *primarily*; in the creature, by *dependance*, and *derivation*: in him, *essentially*, as being his very *Essence*; in them, but as *accidents*, (many of them) adventitious to their beings; and so while they cannot be said to be the *same* things in them, as in him, are fitly said to be his *likeness*.

Inter De-
um &
creaturam
nihil est
commune,

5. This likeness, as it is principally found in man, among all the terrestrial creatures; so hath it, in man, for its seat and subject, his Soul or spiritual part. The effects of divine wisdom, power, goodness, are every where visible, throughout the whole Creation; and as there is no effect, but hath something in it, corresponding to its cause (wherein it was its cause;) so, every Creature doth, some way or other, represent God. Some in virtues, some in life, some in being * on-

5.

am, facta; quia in ipso est virtus & sapientia non facta; alie in quantum solum vivunt, quia ille summe & primo vivit; alie in quantum sunt, quia ille summe & primitus est. Aug. 80. quest. p. (mihi) 211.

* Multis
enim mo-
dis dicere
possunt si-
miles Deo:
alie secun-
dum vir-
tutem, &
sapienti-
am in quan-
tum in quan-
tum

ly,

* τὸ γὰρ
γενέ-
σθαι.

† P. Mo-
lino de
cognitione
Dei.

* Hea-
thens
have dis-
dained
and de-
clained

against so unworthy thoughts of God. Τὸ δὲ θεῖον αὐτὸ
ἀόρατον ὁρδαλμοῖς, ἄρρητον φωνῇ, ἀναγῆς σαρκί, &c. Maxi-
mus Tyr. Dissert. I.

The same Author warns us to take heed, that we ascribe
to God, Μῆτε μέγεθος, μῆτε χῶμα, μῆτε χῆμα, μῆτε ἄλ-
λο τὶ ὕλης παθος. Ibid.

Unto which purpose is that decantate Distich of Homer,
Οὐ γὰρ ὅτιον, &c. And that saying of Pliny, Qua propter
effigiem Dei formamque querere; imbecillitatis humanae reor, appli-
ed by Zanch. de operibus Dei. And we may see much of like
import all edg'd by Natal. Com. lib. I. p. 13. Which (by the
way discovers how flatly opposite the Idolatry, forbidden
in the second Commandment, is to the light of Nature it self.
Which hath been also the just Apology of the Ancient Patrons
of the Christian cause, for the simplicity of their worship in
this respect: and their not imitating the pompous vanity of
Pagan Image-worship. Οὐδὲ θεῖαι εἰκόνας πολλαβάνομεν
εἶναι τὰ ἐγάλματα, ἅτε μωρὴν ἀοράτε θεῶ ἢ ἀσμάτων μὴ
διαγράφοις, &c. Origen. contr. Celsum. lib. 7.

To which purpose see at large Mir. Felix, Quod simulacrum Deo
fingam? &c.

And surely 'tis as improvable against the same piece of
Christian Paganism. The usually assigned differences would
easily be shewn to be trifling impertinencies.

Yet

Yet we find it exprelly charged by Saint Augustine upon the *Anthropomorphites* of old (or *Melitonians*, as he calls them, from one *Melito* the Father of them) not only, that they imagined God in a human shape (which was their known conceit) but that they stated Gods Image in Man, in his *body*, not his *soul*. Nor are *Van Helmonts* Phanxies, about corporal likeness, capable of excuse by any thing, but that they were a *dream* (as they are fitly stil'd) and not likely to impose upon the waking reason of any man.

Corpus hominis non animum esse imaginem Dei.
Aug. (if it be *Augustines*) lib. de hæresibus.
See Dr. Charleton of his Image of God in man.

6. *This image or likeness of God in the Spirit of man, representing what is communicable in him, is either Natural or Moral.* There is first, a *natural image of God*, in the soul of man, which is inseparable from it; and which it can never divest it self of *. Its very spiritual immortal nature, it self, is a representation of his. Its intellective and elective powers are the image of what we are constrained to conceive under the notion of the same powers in him. Yea, the same *understanding*, with the *memory* and *will*, in one soul, are thought a lively resemblance of the † *Trinune Deity*. But there is further a similitude of him in respect of *moral* * virtues or perfections answering to what we conceive in him, under that notion: His *wisdom* (so far as it hath the nature of a moral virtue) his *mercy*, *truth*,
gis Deo propinqua, similitudo, quæ in virtutibus consistit, Bernard.

6.
* *Est Dei similitudo quedam, quam nemo vivens, nisi cum vitâ exuit; quam habet homo & volens, & nolens, &c.*
Bernard. de vitâ Solitar.
† D. Aug. (*fuse*) lib. 10. de Trinitat.
* *Sed est alia, manifestat, Bernard.*

righte-

* צלם
רמות.
Zanch.

righteousness, holiness, &c. These two kinds or parts (as they may be called) of the divine impress upon the spirits of men, are distinguish'd by some (I see not how properly) by the distinct names of *Image*, denoting the *former*; and *similitude*, the latter: answering, as is thought, to two Hebrew words of the like import*: but the things themselves are evidently enough distinct, viz. what perfects the nature of man in *genere physico*, as he is such a particular being in the Universe: and what perfects him, in *genere morali*, as he is considerable in reference to a *Law or rule* guiding him to *blessedness, as his end*.

7.

7. 'Tis a *likeness to God in respect of those moral excellencies or perfections, that is especially considerable by us, in reference to our present purpose; as more immediately relating to the souls blessedness in God*. By the former it hath a *potentiality*, by the latter an *habitude* in reference thereunto. Or (to use terms, more liable to common apprehension) by the *former* it hath a *remoter capacity*, by the latter a *present fitness*; or, as the Apostle expresses it, is *made meet to be partaker of the inheritance of the Saints in Light*, (i. e. *considering this likeness, as begun in the soul*).

8.

8. *Besides what is thus (in the sense before express'd) communicable between God and man, there are some things so peculiarly appropriate to God, as that, in respect of them, there can be no formal likeness in the creature*

*

ture

ture: and it would be impious boldness to aspire thereto. Many things of this kind might be mentioned; I shall only instance in two, wherein there is a manifest competition of the Apostate world with him; and which are therefore more relative to practise; His Sovereign authority, and his Independency. In these while men affect to imitate, they wickedly affront him. And here is the great controversie between the glorious God, and the degenerate Children of Men. Every man would catch at a Godhead, and either assume it to himself, or cast it, many times, upon other creatures, viler and more ignoble than himself: snatch the reins of Government out of Gods hand; and exalt their own wills into an absoluteness, as liable to controul from none: place and settle their dependance on their own wit, power, fortitude, industry; or, if that be a more hopeless course (for they often find an entire Godhead too much for one creature, and are therefore constrained to parcel it out among many) place their confidences and expectations in something else without them: do, often, that ridiculous thing, so worthy to be hooted at, make the congested dirt of the earth their trust, (the righteous shall laugh at him, and say, Lo! this is the man that trusted in riches); their wealth, their strong Tower; which only the Name of the Lord is to his Righteous ones. Yet, all the while, self is the center and end in which all must meet and terminate. This at last carries away

Psal: 52.

6, 7

way the assumed fictitious Deity. And this thing, that is thus now made *like God*, is an *Idol* (which indeed signifies so much) and this imitation of him, wicked Idolatry; than which nothing more debases a reasonable soul, or divests man of himself, that till they redress this, they give no proof of their being men.

Isa. 46. 8.

This *assimilation* of our selves to God is very remote then from being a perfection; it is a most reproachful deformity: as we know imitations, if they be visibly affected, and strained too far, are always thought ridiculous by wise men.

9.

9. *Though, in respect of these incommunicable things, there cannot be a proper, formal, immediate similitude to God; yet, there ought to be a correspondency; which must be measured and estimated by the consideration of his state, and ours; whence it will appear, that what so properly appertains to him, and what ought to correspond thereto in us, do agree to each, upon one and the same intervening reason.*

For instance, Is he *absolutely Supream*, in as much as he is the first Being? the correspondent impression with us, and upon the same reason, must be a most profound, humble self-subjection, disposing our souls to constant obedience to him. Again, Is he *simply independent*; as being self-sufficient and *all in all*? the impression with us must be a *nothingness*, and self-emptiness, engaging us to quit our selves, and live in him.

This

This is the only conformity to God, which with respect to his incommunicable excellencies, our creature-state can admit. It may be also stild a likeness to him, being a real conformity to his Will concerning us, and his very nature as it respects us. We may conceive of it, as of the likeness between a Seal, and the stamp made by it; Especially, supposing the inequality of parts in the Seal to be by the protuberancy of what must form the signature. In that case there would be a likeness, aliquatenus, that is, an exact correspondency; but what would then be convex or bulching out in the Seal, would be, as we know, concave or hollow in the impression. Such is the proportion between Sovereignty and Subjection, between self-fullness, and self-emptiness. Whereas a similitude to God, in respect of his communicable perfections, is as that, between the face and its picture; where no such difference is wont to appear.

10. Assimilation, or conformity to God, in both these respects, composes that excellent frame of moral perfection, which the divine glory, beheld, impresses upon the soul; and which immediately conduces to its satisfaction and blessedness. I say, moral perfection, because that only is capable of being imprest by the intervening ministry of our own understanding; viz. by its Vision, intimated, as was formerly observed, in that of the Apostle, *We shall be like*—for we shall see him, &c. Its natural perfections are antecedent, and pre-supposed.

* Tbes.
Salma. de
Deo im-
menso. l

supposed, therefore not so fitly to be understood here. And I say, *both these ways*; for, as we cannot form an entire *Idea* of God, without taking in, together, his perfections of both sorts, *communicable*, and *incommunicable*, (the former whereof must serve instead of a *genus*; the latter of a *differentia*, in compoling the notion of God *): so nor will his impress on us be entire, without something in it respecting both; in the senses already given.

What it will contribute to *future blessedness*, we shall shortly see, in its place, when we have made a brief enquiry (which is the next thing, according to our order proposed) concerning

[3.]

Thirdly, *The satisfaction that shall hence accrue*. Where it will not be besides our purpose, to take some notice of the significancy of the word. And not to insist on its affinity to the word used for swearing, or rather, being sworn * (which; an oath being the end of controversies, and beyond which we go no further, nor expect more, in way of testifying; would; the more fitly here represent to us the soul in its *non-ultra*; having attained the end of all its motions, and contentions). Its equal nearness to the word signifying the number of *seven*, is not altogether unworthy observation. That number is, we know, often used in Scripture, as denoting *plenitude* and *perfection*; and God hath, as it were, signalliz'd it,

שבע
* Which
some
think to
be the
Niphal of
the same
word
notwith-
standing
the diffe-
rent pun-
ctuation of
the ש.

it, by his rest on the *seventh* day:† and if this were not designedly pointed at here in the present use of this word, (as it must be acknowledged to be frequently used where we have no reason to think it is with such an intendment) it may yet occasion us to look upon the holy soul now entered into the eternal Sabbath * the rest of God: which, (secluding all respect to that circumstance) is, yet, the very substance and true notion of the thing it self (to the consideration whereof I now pass) under the word held forth to us.

† How fit a Symbol it is of Gods Sabbathique rest, see Dr. More's defence of his Philosophical Cabbala from Philo. Judæus.

* Erit ibi vere maxi-

imum Sabbatum, non habens vesperam, quod commendavit Dominus in primis operibus mundi; ut legitur. & requievit die Septimo—Dies enim Septimus etiam nos ipsi erimus, quando ipsi fuerimus benedictionum & sanctificationum pleni atque referti—ibi vacabimus & videbimus, videbimus & amabimus, amabimus & laudabimus, &c. Aug. de civit. Dei l. 22. c. 30. vid. eund. de civit. Dei l. 17. c. 4.

For this *satisfaction*; is the *souls rest in God*; its perfect enjoyment of the most perfect good: the expletion of the whole capacity of its will; the total filling up of that vast enlarged appetite; the perfecting of all its desires in *delight* and joy. Now *delight* or *joy* (for they differ not, save that the latter word is thought something more appropriate to reasonable nature) is fitly defined, *the rest of the desiring faculty in the thing desired* *; Desire and Delight, are but two acts of Love, diversified, only, by the distance, or presence of the same Object: which, when 'tis di-

* Quies appetitus in appetibili. Aquin. Sum.

Zeph. 3.
17.

stant, the Soul, acted and prompted by love, desires, moves towards it, pursues it; when present, and attained, delights in it, enjoys it, stays upon it, satisfies it self in it, (according to the measure of goodness it finds there). *Desire*, is therefore, *love in motion*; *Delight*, is *love in rest*: And of this latter, *Delight* or joy, Scripture evidently gives us this Notion, *He will rejoyce over thee with joy*, (unto which is presently added as exegetical), *he will rest in his love*: Which, *resting*, can be but the same thing with, *being satisfied*.

This *satisfaction* then is nothing else but *the repose and rest of the soul amidst infinite delights*: its peaceful acquiescence, having attained the ultimate term of all its motions, beyond which it cares to go no further: the solace it finds in an adequate full good; which it accounts enough for it, and beyond which, it desires no more; reckons its state as good as it can be, and is void of all hovering thoughts, (which perfect rest must needs exclude), or inclination to change.

And so doth this *being satisfied*, not only generally, signifie the Soul to be at *rest*; but it specifies that *rest*; and gives us a distinct account of the nature of it. As, that it is not a *forced violent rest*; such as proceeds from a beguiled ignorance, a drowsie sloth, a languishing weakness, or a desire and hope of happiness, by often frustrations bafled into *despair*, (to all which, the native import and

and propriety of that word [*satisfaction*] doth strongly repugn). But it discovers it to be a *natural rest*; I mean, *from an internal principle*. The soul is not held in its present state of enjoyment by a strong and violent hand: but rests in it by a connaturalness thereunto: is attempered to it, by its own inward constitution and frame. It rests not as a descending stone, intercepted by something by the way, that holds and stops it; else it would fall further: but as a thing would rest in its own centre; with such a rest as the earth is supposed to have in its proper place; that, being hung upon nothing, is yet unmoved (*ponderibus librata suis*), equally ballanced by its own weight every way.

It is a *rational judicious rest*; upon certain knowledg, that its present state is simply *best*, and not capable of being changed for a *better*. The soul cannot be held under a perpetual cheat, so as always to be satisfied with a shadow: It may be so befool'd for a while, but if it remain satisfied, in a state that never admits of change; that state must be such, as commends it self to the most thoroughly informed reason and judgment.

It is hence a *free voluntary chosen rest*: Such as God professes his own to be in Zion; *This is my rest, here will I dwell, for I have desired it.* Psal. 132. 14.

It is a *complacential rest*, wherein the soul abides steddy, bound only by the cords of

Pfal. 16. 6
בְּנֵי מֵוָה

love; a rest in the midst of pleasantness; The Lord is my portion, the lots are fallen to me [in amœnitatibus]; it cannot be more fitly exprest than [amidst pleasantness]: And this speaks, not only what the Psalmists condition was, but the *sense*, and *account* he had of it. That temper of mind gives us some *Idea* of that *contentful*, *satisfied* abode with God, which the blessed shall have. He intimates, how undesirous he was of any change. *Their sorrows* (he told us above) *should be multiplied that hasten after another God*. Hereafter there will be infinitely less appearance of reason for any such thought. Now, it is the sense of an holy soul, *Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none I desire on earth besides thee*) q. d. Heaven and Earth yield not a tempting Object, to divert me from thee): 'tis now so, at some times, when faith and love are in their triumph and exaltation (but the Lord knows how seldom)! but much more *when we see him as he is*, and are *satisfied with his likeness*!

Ver. 4.

It's an active vigorous rest. Action about the end, shall be perpetuated here, though action towards it, ceases. 'Tis the rest of an *awak'ned*, not of a *drowsie*, *sluggish* soul; of a soul *satisfied*, by heavenly *sensations* and *fruits*: not incapable of them; or that hath its powers bound up by a stupifying sleep.

Its the rest of *hope*, perfected in *fruition*, not lost in *despair*; of *satisfied*, not *defeated* expecta-

expectation. Despair may occasion rest to a mans *body*, but not to his *mind*; or a cessation from *further endeavours*, when they are constantly found vain, but not from *trouble and disquiet*: It may *suspend from action*, but never *satisfie*.

This satisfaction therefore speaks both the *reality* and *nature* of the souls rest in glory: *that* it rests; and with *what kind* of rest.

Whether blessedness do formally consist in this satisfying fruiti-
on, or in the antecedent Vision: This satisfaction is certainly
inseparable from it, and I see not how to be excluded out of its
formal Notion: 'tis not *vision*, as *vision*, but as *satisfying*, that
makes us happy; and to talk of the satisfaction of pleasure
which the *understanding* hath in *knowing* is unipid: while
the *soul understanding*, i. e. the *mind*, *knows*, 'tis the soul en-
joying, i. e. the *will*, is pleased and finds content: and if the
soul be fully *contented*, it is not blessed, and it *is*, by being so,
when it saith, Now am I fully satisfied, I have enough, I desire
no more.

C H A P. V.

The relative consideration of these three Ingredients of the Saints Blessedness. Where it is propounded, to shew particularly: 1. What relation Vision hath to Assimilation. 2. What both these have to Satisfaction. The relation between the two former, enquired into. An entrance upon the much larger Discourse, What relation and influence the two former have towards the third: What, Vision of Gods Face, or Glory, contributes towards Satisfaction, Estimated from the consideration, 1. Of the Object, the Glory to be beheld; as 'tis Divine, entire, permanent, appropriate.

THUS far have we view'd the parts or necessary concurrents, of which the Blessedness of the Saints must be composed, *absolutely and severally* each from other: We proceed,

Secondly, To consider them *relatively*, viz. in the *mutual respects* they bear one to another; as they actually compose this blessed state: Wherein we shall shew particularly:

1. The

1. The relation (by way of influence, and dependence) between *Vision*, and *Assimilation*.

Between both these and the *Satisfaction* that ensues: Which latter I intend more to dwell upon; and only to touch the former, as a more speculative, and less improvable subject of Discourse, in my way to this.

1. First, It may be considered, What relation there may be *between Vision of God*, and *Assimilation*, or *being made like to him*; and it must be acknowledged (according to what is commonly observed of the *mutual action* of the *understanding* and *will*) that the *sight of God*, and *likeness to him*, do *mutually* contribute each towards other. The sight of God assimilates, makes the Soul like unto him; that likeness more disposes it for a continued renewed Vision. It could never have attained the beatifical Vision of God, had it not been prepared thereto, by a gradual previous likeness to him *. For righteousness (which we have shewn qualifies for this blessedness) consists in a likeness to God; and it could never have been so prepared,

* Which necessity of a likeness to God to dispose

for the Vision of him, is excellently express'd by a *Platonick* Philosopher.

The divine nature, the τὸ θεῖον. which he saith is liable to no sense, (μόνη δὲ τῷ τῆς ψυχῆς καλλίστῃ καὶ καθαρότατῃ, καὶ νοεωτάτῃ, καὶ κρυφωτάτῃ, καὶ ἀνεκδιαιρέτῃ, ὁρατὴν δὲ οὐκ ὁμοιωμένην, &c.) is yet visible, to that in the soul, which is most beautiful, most pure, most perspicacious, most sublime, most noble, in respect of a certain similitude and cognation that is between them. *Max. Tyr.*

had not some knowledg of God introduced that conformity and yielding bent of heart towards him. For the entire frame of the *new man* * *made after the image of God, is renewed in knowledg:*

Col. 3. 10.

But as, notwithstanding the circular action of the understanding and will upon one another, there must be a beginning of this course some-where, and the understanding is usually reckon'd the *πρῶτον κινῶν*, the first mover, the leading faculty: So, notwithstanding the mutual influence of these two upon each other, *seeing* hath a natural precedency, and must lead the way unto *being like*; Which is sufficiently intimated in the Text, [*I shall behold thy face*], and then [*I shall be satisfied with thy likeness*]; and more fully in that parallel Scripture: *We shall be like him, for we shall see him, &c.*

From whence, also, and from the very nature of the thing, we may fitly state the relation of the first of these to the second, to be that of a cause to its effect: *Sight* begets *likeness*, is *antecedent* to it, and *productive* of it.

That is, *The face or glory of God seen*; that *glory* in conjunction with our *Vision* of it: For the *Vision* operates not, but according to the efficaciousness of the thing seen; nor can that glory have any such operation, but by the intervention of *Vision*.

'Tis therefore the *Glory of God seen*, as seen, that assimilates, and impresses its likeness upon the beholding Soul: and so its causality

causality is that of an *objective cause* (which whether it belong to the efficient or final, I shall not here dispute) that *operates* only as it is *apprehended*: so introducing its own form, and similitude into the subject it works upon. Such a kind of cause were *Jacobs* streaked rods of the production that ensued; and such a cause is any thing whatever, that begets an impression upon an apprehensive subject, by the mediation and ministry, whether of the fancy or understanding. This kind of causality the word hath in its renewing transforming work; and the Sacraments, wherein they are *causal* of *real physical* mutations on the Subjects of them. So much of the Image of God as is here imprest upon souls by Gospel-dispensations, so much is imprest of his glory. The work of grace is glory begun.

And now, as glory *initial*, and *progressive* in this life enters at the eye--(*beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, we are changed*) so doth perfect and consummate glory in the other life. For we have no reason to imagine to our selves any alteration in the natural order the powers of the soul have towards each other, by its passing into a state of glory.

The *Object* seen, is unspeakably *efficacious*; the *Act* of intuition is *full of lively vigour*; the *Subject* was prepared, and in a disposition before; and, What should hinder, but this glorious effect should immediately ensue? as the Sun no sooner puts up his head
above

Cor. 3.
8.

The Blessedness of the Righteous.

above the Hemisphere, but all the vast space, whither it can diffuse its beams, is presently transformed into its likeness, and turned into a Region of Light.

What more can be wanting to cause all the darkness of Atheism, carnality, and every thing of sin, for ever to vanish out of the awaking soul; and an entire frame of holiness to succeed: but one such transforming sight of the face of God? One sight of his glorious *Majesty* presently *subdues*, and works it to a full subjection; one sight of his *purity* makes it *pure*; one sight of his *loveliness* turns it into *love*: and such a sight always remaining, the impress remains always actually (besides that it is in it self most habitual and permanent in the souls now confirmed state) fresh and lively.

The *Object* hath quite another aspect upon a wicked soul, when it awakes; and the *act* of seeing is of another kind: therefore no such *effect* follows. Besides, the *subject* is otherwise disposed, and therefore as the Sun enlightens not the inward parts of an impervious dung-hill, but it enlightens air; so the sight of God transforms and assimilates at last, not a wicked, but it doth a godly soul. That which here makes the greatest difference, in the temper of the subject, is Love. I look upon the face of a *stranger*, and it *moves* me not; but upon a *friend*, and his face presently *transforms* mine into a lively cheerful aspect. (*As an iron sharpens iron, so doth the face of a man his friend*; puts a sharp-

sharpness and a quickness into his looks). The soul that loves God, opens it self to him, admits his influences and impressions, is easily moulded, and wrought to his will, yields to the transforming power of his appearing glory. There is no resistant principle remaining, when the love of God is perfected in it; and so overcoming is the first sight of his glory upon the awaking soul, that it perfects *it*, and so, his likeness, both at once.

But enmity fortifies the soul against him, as with bars and doors; averts it from him; carries with it an horrid guilty consciousness; which fills it with eternal *despair* and *rage*, and inwraps it in the blackness of darkness for ever.

2. Both the *Vision* of God, and *likeness* to him, must be considered in their *relation* to the consequent *satisfaction*, and the influence they have in order thereto. I say, both; for though this satisfaction be not expressly, and directly referred by the letter of the Text, to the sight of Gods face; yet its relation thereto, in *the nature of the thing*, is sufficiently apprehensible and obvious: both *mediate*, in respect of the influence it hath towards the satisfying assimilation; and *immediate*, (which we are now to consider), as it is so highly pleasurable in it self; and is plainly enough intimated *in the Text*: being applied, in the same breath, to a thing so immediately and intimately conjunct with this Vision, as, we find it is. Moreover, supposing

posing, that [*likeness*] here, do (as it hath been granted it may) signify *objective* glory also as well as *subjective*, and repeat what is contained in the former expression, [*the face of God*], the reference satisfaction hath to this vision (which the re-mention of its object, though under a varied form of expression, supposes) will be more express : Therefore we shall shew,

1. What the vision of the divine glory contributes to the satisfaction of the blessed Soul, and what felicity it must needs take herein : Which cannot but be very great, whether we respect,

{ The glory seen, the object of this vision :
or,

{ The act of vision, or, intuition it self.

Psal. 16.
11.

1. The *Object*, the glory beheld : What a spring of pleasure is here ? what rivers of pleasure flow hence ? *In thy presence*, (saith the Psalmist) *is fulness of joy : at thy right hand are pleasures for evermore.* The awaking Soul, having now past the path of life, (drawn through *Sheol* it self, the state of deadly-head), appears immediately in this *presence* ; and, What makes this *presence* so *joyous*, but the pleasant brightness of this *face* ? To be *in the presence* of any one, and *before his face*, (*in conspectu*), are equivalent expressions : therefore the Apostle quoting this passage, renders it thus, *Thou hast filled me with gladness, by thy [countenance]* : Now

Act: 2.28.
which indeed is
the Seventies reading of the Psalmists words.

in this glorious presence, or within view of the face of God, is [fulness] of joy, i. e. joy unto *satisfaction*. And the Apostle Jude speaking of *this presence* under this name [a presence of glory] tells us of an exceeding joy, καὶ ἡγαυίαν τῆς δόξης, a jubilation (an ἀγαλλίασις) that shall attend the presentment of Saints there. The holy Soul now enters the divine *Shechinah*, Verse 24. the Chamber of Presence of the great King, the habitation of his holiness and glory, the place where his honour dwelleth. Here his glory furrounds it with incircling beams: 'tis beset with glory, therefore surely also fill'd with joy. When the veil is drawn aside; or we are within the veil; in that very presence whither Jesus the forerunner is for us entered (through that path of life), O the satisfying overcoming pleasure of this sight! Now, that, is to us revealed, or unveiled glory, which was hidden before. Here the glory Ezek. 7. set in Majesty (as the expression is, concerning the glory of the Temple) is presented to view openly and without umbrage. God is now no longer seen through an obscuring medium. They are not now shadowed glimmerings, transient, oblique glances, but the direct beams of full-ey'd glory that shine upon us. The discovery of this glory is the ultimate product of that infinite wisdom and love, that have been working from eternity, and for so many thousand years, through all the successions of time, towards the heirs of salvation. The last and compleat issue of the great atchievements, sharp conflicts, glorious victo-

Heb. 11.
16.

victories, high merits of our mighty Redeemer. All these end in the opening of Heaven (the laying of this glory as it were common) to all believers. This is the upshot, and close of that great design: Will it not (think ye) be a satisfying glory! The full blessedness of the redeemed, is the Redeemers reward. He cannot be *satisfied* in seeing his seed, if they should be *unsatisfied*. He cannot behold them with content, if his heart tell him not, that he hath done well enough for them. God would even be ashamed to be called their God, had he not made provision for their entertainment worthy of a God. 'Tis the season of Christs Triumphs, and Saints are to enter into *His* joy. 'Tis the appointed jubilee, at the finishing of all Gods works from the Creation of the world, when he shall purposely shew himself in his most adorable Majesty, and when Christ shall appear in his own likeness (he appeared in another likeness before); surely glory must be in its exaltation in that day. But take a more distinct account, how grateful a sight this glory will be, in these following particulars,

1. It is the *Divine* glory. Let your hearts dwell a little upon this consideration. 'Tis the *Glory of God*, *i. e.* the glory which the blessed God both enjoys and affords, which he contemplates in himself, and which rayes from him to his Saints; 'tis the felicity of the *divine Being*. It satisfies a Deity, Will it not a worm? 'Tis a glory that results and shines
from

from him; and in that sense also divine (which here I mainly intend); the beauty of his own face, the lustre of Divine perfections; every Attribute bears a part, all concur to make up this glory.

And here pretermittting those which are less liable to our apprehension; his Eternity, Immenstity, Simplicity, &c. (of which, not having their like in us, we are the more incapable to form distinct conceptions, and consequently of perceiving the pleasure, that we may hereafter upon the removal of other impediments, find in the contemplation of them), let us bethink our selves, how admirable and ravishing the glory will be,

1. Of his *unsearchable wisdom*, which hath glory peculiarly annexed, and properly belonging to it. Glory is as it were, by inheritance, due to wisdom. The *wise* shall inherit glory. And here, now, the blessed Souls behold it in its first seat, and therefore in its *prime* glory: wisdom, counsel, understanding, are said to be *with* him; as if no where else. Twice we have the Apostle describing glory to God, under the notion of *only wise*; which is but an acknowledging him glorious in this respect. Wisdom, we know is the proper and most connatural glory of *intellectual nature*: whether as it relates to *speculation*, when we call it *knowledge*; or *action*, when 'tis *prudence*.

Prov. 3.35!
Job 12.

Rom. 16.
27.
Tim. 1.
17.

How pleasant will the contemplation be, of the divine wisdom, in that former Notion! When in that glass, that *speculum eternitatis*,
we

Col. 2: 3.

we shall have the lively view of all that truth, the knowledg whereof can be any way possible and grateful to our natures; and *in his light, see light!* When all those vast treasures of wisdom and knowledg, (which already by their alliance to *Christ*, Saints are interested in) shall lye open to us! When the tree of Knowledg shall be without enclosure; and the most voluptuous Epicurism, in reference to it, be innocent! Where there shall neither be *lust*, nor *forbidden fruit*; no *with-holding* of *desirable* knowledg, nor *affectation* of *undesirable*! When the *pleasure* of speculation shall be without the *toil*; and that maxim be eternally antiquated, that *Increased knowledg increases sorrow*!

As to the other notion of it; How can it be less grateful to behold the wisdom that made, and govern'd the world? that compass so great designs: and this, no longer, in its effects, but in it self? Those *works* were honourable and glorious, sought of all them that have pleasure in them: What will be the glory of their *cause*? It would gratifie some mens curiosity to behold the unusual motion of some rare *automaton*; but an ingenious person would, with much more pleasure, pry into the secret Springs of that motion; and observe its inward frame, and parts, and their dependence, and order to each other. 'Tis comely to behold the exterior œconomy of a well-govern'd people; when great affairs are, by orderly conduct, brought to happy issues;

issues: but to have been at the helm; to have seen the pertinent, proper application of such and such maxims to the incident cases; to have known all the reasons of state; heard debates; observ'd; with what great sagacity, inconveniencies have been foreseen, and with what diligence prevented: would much more gratifie an enquiring Genius.

When the Records of Eternity shall be exposed to view; all the counsels and results of that profound Wisdom look'd into; How will it transport! When it shall be discern'd, Lo! thus were the designs laid; here were the apt junctures, and admirable dependencies of things: which, when acted upon the stage of the world, seem'd so perplext, and cross so full of mysterious intricacy?

If Saint *Paul* were so ravish'd at those more obscure appearances of divine wisdom, which we find him admiring, *Rom. 11. 33, O the depths!* &c. What satisfaction will it yield; to have a perfect model, of the deep thoughts and counsels of God, presented to open view! How is the happiness of *Solomons* Servants magnified, that had the priviledg continually to stand before him, and hear his wisdom! But this happiness will be proportionably greater, as *Solomons* God is greater than he.

2. The glory of his Power will add comeliness to the Object of this Vision. Power duly placed and allay'd is lovely. Beauty consists much in a Symmetry or proportion of parts. So must there be a concurrence of divine perfections, to compose and make

καίτος τῆς
δόξης.

Col. 1. 11.

Rom. 6. 4.

Chap. 3.
16.

Job 26. 9.

Ver. 14.

up the beautiful complexion of his face ; to give us a *right aspect*, the *true Idea* of God, And here his power hath a necessary ingre-
 diency. How incoherent, and disagreeing with it self, were the notion of an *impotent God*? His *power* gives lively strokes to his glory. 'Tis called *glorious power*, or the *power of glory*: Yea, 'tis simply called *glory it self*; The Apostle tells us *Christ was raised from the dead by the [glory] of the Father*, when 'tis plain he means *[power]*: And the same Apostle prays, on the behalf of the *Ephesians*, that God would grant them according to the *riches of his glory* to be strengthened with *might*, &c. How frequently are *power* and *glory* ascribed to him in conjunction? intimating that, *as* he is *powerful*, he is *glorious*. And certainly, even *this glory*, cannot but cast a grateful aspect upon the blessed Soul, and be infinitely pleasant to behold. What triumphs doth it now raise in gracious Spirits, to behold the *exertions of it in his works*; to read its *descriptions in his word*; while as yet he *holds back the face of his throne*, while the countenance of in-
 throned Majesty cannot be seen; when so little a portion is heard of him, and the thunder of his *power* so little understood! The infinitely fainter Rayes of this power in a creature; power in that unspeakable di-
 minution and abatement; that derived, pre-
 carious power, when 'tis innocently used, is observed with pleasure: Here is *power* in the *throne*, power in its chief and highest seat ;
 essen-

essential, and self-originated power; the root and fountain, the very Element of power; power in its proper situation, in its native place, to which it belongs. *God hath spoken once, twice have I heard this, that power belongeth unto God.* It languishes in a Creature, as in an alien Subject. *If I speak of strength; lo he is strong* (saith Job). *q. d.*

Pfal. 62.

11.

Power to God Hebr. Job 26.

Created power is not worth the speaking of; Here is the power that deserves the name, that is so indeed. How satisfying a pleasure will this afford, to contemplate this *radical power*? this all-creating, all-ruling power? the principle of all action, motion, and life, throughout the whole Creation? This will be as natural a pleasure, as the Child takes in the Mothers bosom, and in embracing the womb that bare it. How grateful to behold, whence the vast frame of nature sprang! what stretcht out the Heavens, established the Earth, sustained all things! what turned the mighty Wheels of Providence, throughout all the successions of time! what ordered, and changed times and seasons; chained up Devils, restrained the outrages of a tumultuous world, preserved Gods little Flock! especially, what gave Being to the new Creation, (*The exceeding greatness of power that wrought in them that believed, &c.*) what made hearts love God, embrace a Saviour! what it was that overcame *their own*, and made them a willing people in that memorable day!

Eph. 1.19, 20.

Psal. 110. 3.

How delightful a contemplation to think,
H 2 * with

with so enlarged an understanding, of the possible effects of this power; and so far as a creature can range into infinity, to view innumerable creations, in the creative power of God!

And yet how pleasant to think, not only of the extents, but of the restraints of this power; and how, when none could limit, it became *ordinate*, and did limit it self; that, since it could do so much, it did no more; turned not sooner a degenerate world into flames: withheld it self from premature revenge, that had abortiv'd the womb of Love, and cut off all the hopes of this blessed Eternity that is now attained! This also speaks the *greatness of power*: Let the power of my Lord be great, according as thou hast spoken, the Lord is gracious, long-suffering, &c. This was his mightiest power, whereby he overcame himself: *Fortior est qui se, &c.*

3. And what do we think of the ravishing aspects of his *Love*! when it shall, now, be *open-fac'd*, and have laid aside its vail! when his amiable smiles shall be checkered with no intermingled frowns; the light of that pleasing *countenance* be obscured by no intervening cloud! when *goodness* (which is love issuing into benefaction, or doing good) *grace*, (which adds freeness unto goodness) *mercy* (which is grace towards the miserable) shall conspire in their distinct, and variegated appearances to set off each other, and enhance the pleasure of the admiring soul! when the wonted doubts shall all cease, and

*Posse &
nolle nobi-
le.*

Numb. 14
17, 18.

and the difficulty vanish, of reconciling (once necessary) *fatherly severity* with *Love*! when the full sense, shall be unfolded to the life, of that description of the divine nature, *God is Love*: and the soul be no longer put to read the love of God in his *name* (as *Moses* was when the *sight* of his *face* could not yet be obtained); shall not need to spell it by letters and syllables; but behold it in His very nature it self, and see how intimately Essential it is to the *divine Being*! how glorious will this appearance of God be, (we, now, hear something of the *glory of his grace*) Eph. 1. 6. and how satisfying the tuition of that glory! Now is the proper season for the full exercise and discovery of Love. This day hath been long expected, and lo, now, 'tis dawned upon the awakening soul: It's now called forth; its senses unbound; all its powers inspirited, on purpose, for love-visions and enjoyments; 'tis now to take its fill of loves. The Apostles extatical prayer is now answered to the highest degree possible with respect to such an one. Eph. 3. 16, 17, 18, 19. He is now, according to the riches of divine glory, strengthened with might, by the Spirit, in the inner man--to comprehend with all Saints, what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; to know that love that passeth knowledge, &c. He shall now no longer stand amazed, spending his guesses, *What manner of love this should be*; and expecting fuller discoveries, further effects of it, that did not yet appear: but sees the utmost, all that his soul can bear, or wish

Gal. 4. 4.

to see. He hath now traced home the rivulets to their fountain, the beams to the very Sun of Love. He hath got the prospect, at last, into that heart, where the great thoughts of love were lodg'd from everlasting; where all its counsels and designs were formed. He sees what made God become a man; what clothed a Deity with humane flesh; what made Eternity become the birth of time (when come to its parturient *fulness*); what mov'd the heart of the Son of God to pitch his Tabernacle among men; what engaged him to the enterprize of redeeming sinners; what mov'd him so earnestly to contest with a perishing world, led him at last to the Cross, made him content to become a sacrifice to God, a spectacle to Angels and men, in a bitter reproachful death, inflicted by the Sacrilegious hands of those whom he was all this while designing to save. The amazed soul now sees into the bottom of this design; understands why it self was not made a prey to Divine Revenge: whence it was, that it perish'd not in its enmity against God; that he was not provoked by the obstinacy of its disobedience, and malice of its unbelief, beyond the possibility of an atonement; why he so long suffered its injurious neglects of him, and unkind repulses of a merciful Saviour; and perswaded, till at last he overcame, made the averse heart yield, the careless disaffected soul cry out, Where is my God? Now a Christ or I perish? All this is now resolved into *love*: And the adoring

doring soul sees how well the effects agree to their cause, and are owned by it. Nothing but heaven it self that gives the *sense*, can give the *notion* of this pleasure.

4. Nor will the glory of *holiness* be less resplendent; that great Attribute which even in a remote descent from its original, is frequently mentioned with the adjunct of *beauties*. What loveliness will those *beauties* add to this *blessed face* !

Not here to insist (which is besides my purpose) upon the various notions of holiness: *Real holiness* Scripture states in *purity*, an alienation from sin; 'tis set in opposition to all filthiness, to all moral impurity; and in that notion it best agrees to God; and comprehends his *righteousness*, and *veracity*, and, indeed, whatever we can conceive in him, under the notion of a moral excellency.

This may therefore be stil'd a transcendental attribute, that as it were runs through the rest, and casts a glory upon every one: 'Tis an attribute of attributes; Those are fit predications, *holy power, holy truth, holy love, &c.* And so it is the very lustre, and glory of his other perfections; *He is glorious in holiness*. Hence in matters of greatest moment, he is, sometimes, brought in *Swearing by his holiness*, (which he is not wont to do by any one single attribute), as though it were a fuller expression of himself, (an *adaquatior conceptus*) than any of the rest.

Psal. 110.
3, &c.

2 Cor. 7. 1.

Exod. 15
11.
Psal. 89.
35.
Amos 4

The Blessedness of the Righteous.

What is of so great an account with him, will not be of least account with his holy ones, when they appear in his glorious presence. Their own holiness is a conformity to his; the likeness of it. And as their beholding it, forms them into that likeness; so that likeness makes them capable of beholding it with pleasure. Divine holiness doth, now, more *ravish* than *affright*. This hath been the language of sinful dust, *Who can stand before this holy God?* when holiness hath appeared armed with terrors, guarded with flames, and the Divine Majesty been represented as a consuming fire. Such apprehensions sin and guilt naturally beget: *The sinners of Sion were afraid.* But so far as the new man is put on, created after God, and they, who were darkness, are made light in the Lord, he is not under any notion more acceptable to them, than as he is the *Holy one*. They love his *Law*, because *holy*; and love *each other*, because *holy*; and *hate themselves*, because they are no more so. Holiness hath still a pleasing aspect when they find it in an Ordinance, meet it in a Sabbath; every glimpse of it is lovely. But with what triumphs hath the holiness of God himself been celebrated even by Saints on earth? *Who is a God like unto thee, glorious in holiness! There is none holy as the Lord, for there is none besides thee. Sing unto the Lord, all ye Saints of his, and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness.* What thoughts

Exod. 15.
11.

1 Sam. 2. 2.

Psal. 30.

4. 97. 12.

thoughts will they have of it, * when their eyes can behold that glory; when they immediately look on the archetypal holiness, of which their own is but the image; and

* Si ergo pulchritudo divina nondum visa, sed solum cre-

dita & sperata, tantum ignem desiderii excitat: Quid faciet cum remoto velo, ut est in se conspicitur? Omnino id faciet ut torrente voluptatis illius inebriati, neque velimus, neque possimus, vel ad punctum temporis, oculos ab ea divertere. Bellarm. de ascens. mentis ad Deum, grad. 2.

can view that glorious pattern, they were so long in framing to? How joyfully will they then fall in with the rest of the heavenly host; and join in the same adoration and praise, in the same acclamation, and triumphant song, *Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Sabaoth!* How unconceivable is the pleasure of this sight; when the *αὐτὸ καλόν*, the first pulchritude, the original beauty offers it self to view! Holiness is intellectual beauty; Divine holiness is the most perfect, and the measure of all other: And what is the pleasure and satisfaction, of which we speak, but the perfection and rest of love? Now Love, as love, respects, and connotes, a pulchritude in its object. And then the most perfect pulchritude, the ineffable, and immortal pulchritude, that cannot be declared by words, or seen with eyes, (they are an Heathens * expressions concerning it), how can it but perfectly, and eternally please and satisfy?

* Max. Tyr. differ. II.

Id. ibid.

And

* Plato in
Phaedro
passim.

(Though
he there
speak
these
things
as the
memoirs
of his
supposed
præ-ex-
istent
soul).

† ἐν δ' αἰ-
μονι χορῶν
* ὁ ὅστις
τέλειον.

† ἐν αἰγῇ
καθαρῇ, καθαροὶ ὄντες, κάλλος λαμπρόν·

And we are told by the great Pagan *Theologue* *, in what state we can have the felicity of that spectacle. Not in our present state; when we have, indeed, but obscure representations, of such things as are, with souls of highest excellency: But when we are associated to the *blessed quire* †. When we are delivered from the body, (which we now carry about, *as the Oyster doth its shell* *). When we are no longer sensible of the evils of time. When we wholly apply our selves to that blessed Vision; are admitted to the beholding of the simple permanent sights; and behold them, † being our selves pure, in the pure light: Then have we the view of the *bright shining pulchritude*, &c.

2. It is an *entire* or *united* glory. We have something of the divine glory shining, now, upon us: but the many interpositions cause a various refraction of its light. We have but its dispersed rayes, it's scattered, disshevel'd beams: we shall then have it perfect and full. 'Tis the eternal glory we are hereafter to behold.

Eternity (as the notion of it is wont to be stated) is a duration that excludes

both { Succession,
and
End.

And

And if it be an unsuccessive duration, (though it is more difficult to apprehend how the being or enjoyments of a creature can come under that mensuration, or how there can be any such), the glory presented to the view of a blessed Soul, cannot be presented by parcels, but at once. * In our temporary state, while we are under the measure of time, we are not capable of the *fulness* of blessedness, or misery; for time exists not all together, but by parts. And indeed we can neither enjoy, nor suffer more, at once, than can be compassed within one moment; for no more exists together. But our relation to eternity (according to this notion of it) will render the same invariable appearance of glory, always presentaneous to us, in the entire fulness of it. We read indeed of certain *usquequasamiserias*, *afterings of Faith* (as it may be significantly enough rendred, let but the novelty of the expression be pardoned), *things lacking* we read it; but there will be here no *usquequasamiserias* *signs, afterings of glory*. What is perfect admits no increase; 'tis already full: and, Why should not a full glorify satisfy? There's here no expectation of (greater) *future*, to abate the pleasure of *present* discoveries: Why therefore shall not this *satisfaction* be conceived full and perfect? It must be the *fulness of joy*.

3. 'Tis *permanent* glory; a never fading, unwithering glory, (*ἀφθάρτος, ἀμείνωντος*) glory

* *Aeternitas est interminabilis vite tota simul & perfecta possessio.*
Boeth.

Thes. 3.
10.

3.
Pct. 1.3.

2 Cor. 4.
17.
2 Tim. 2.
30.
1 Pet. 5.
10.

Isa. 60. 14.

Psal. 16:
11.

ry that will never be fullied, or obscured, never be in a declination. This blessed face never grows old; never any wrinkle hath place in it. 'Tis the *eternal glory* (in the other part of the notion of *eternity*), as it imports an endless duration, neither subject to *decay*, in *it self*, nor to injury, or impairment *from without*. As stable as the divine Being; [*Thy God, thy Glory; the Lord thy everlasting light*]: If that have a *true* sense with respect to any state of the Church *militant on earth*, it must needs have a more *full* sense, in reference to it *triumphing in heaven*. As, therefore, *full* entire glory affords *fulness of joy*; *permanent, everlasting* glory affords *pleasures for evermore*.

4. An *appropriate* glory, even to them 'tis so; a glory wherein they are really interested. 'Tis.

{ The glory of their God,
And their happiness is designed to
them from it.

They are not unconcern'd in it, as 'tis *the glory of God*. It cannot but be grateful to them, to behold the shining glory of *their God*; whom they feared, and served before, while they could have no such sight of him. That glory of his was, once, under a cloud, concealed from the world, wrapt up in obscurity: It, now, breaks the cloud, and justifies the fear and reverence

rence of his Faithful and Loyal Servants, against Atheistical Rebels, that feared him not. 'Tis infinitely pleasing to see *him* now so glorious, whom they thought to have a glory beyond all their conceptions before; while others would not think so of him, but judg'd it safe to slight, and set him at nought. Subjects share in their Princes glory, Children in their Fathers. But besides that collateral interest, that interest by reflection,

They have a more direct interest in this glory. A true and real right : upon a manifold title, The Fathers gift, Sons purchase, Holy Ghosts oblation, and earnest; The Promises tender; their Faiths acceptance; their Fore-runners prepossession: Yea, 'tis their *inheritance*; they are Children, and therefore Heirs, Heirs of God, and joint-Heirs with Christ, *to the same glory with him*. They are, by him, received to the glory of God, *called to his Kingdom and glory*. Will it not contribute exceedingly to their satisfaction, when they shall look upon this glory, not as unconcerned spectators, but as interess'd persons; *This is my happiness, to behold and enjoy this blessed God?* What a rapturous expression is that, *God our own God shall bless us*; and that, *Thy God thy glory!* Upon interest in God, follows their interest in *his glory and blessedness*: Which is so much the dearer, and more valuable, *as it is theirs: Their glory, from their*

Rom. 8.
17.
ch. 15. 7.
1 Theſ. 2.
12.

Pſal. 67. 6.

Monfieur
de Renti.

their God. They fhall be bleffed by God, their own God; Drink waters out of their own well. How endearing a thing is propriety! Another mans fon is ingenious, comely, perfonable, this may be a matter of envy; but *mine own is fo*, this is a joy. I read in the life of a devout Nobleman of France *, that receiving a Letter from a friend, in which were inferted thefe words, *Deus meus, & omnia; My God, and my all*: he thus returns back to him, "I know not what your intent was, to put into your letter thefe words, *Deus meus, & omnia; My God, and my all*: Only you invite me thereby to return the fame to you, and to all creatures; *My God, and my all; my God, and my all; my God, and my all*; If perhaps you take this for your Motto, and ufe it to exprefs how full your heart is of it; think you it poffible, I fhould be filent upon fuch an invitation, and not exprefs my fenfe thereof? Likewise, be it known unto you therefore, that he is *my God, and my all*; and if you doubt of it, I fhall fpeak it an hundred times over. I fhall add no more; for any thing elfe is fuperfluous, to him that is truly penetrated with *My God, and my all*: I leave you therefore in this happy ftate of jubilation; and conjure you, to beg for me, of God, the folid fenfe of thefe words.

And do we think, *My God, and my all*;
or

or *My God, and my glory*, will have lost its emphasis in heaven? or that 'twill be less significant among awaked souls? These things concur then, concerning the *Object*: 'tis most excellent (even *divine*), *entire, permanent, and theirs*: How can it but satisfy?

CHAP.

C H A P. VI.

What the Vision of Gods Face contributes to the Souls satisfaction, *Estimated from the consideration of the Act of Vision it self. Wherein this pleasure surpasses that of sense. A comparison pursued more at large, between this intuition and discourse between it and Faith. This intuition more absolutely considered: Its Characters, and what they contribute to the satisfaction of the blessed Soul: That 'tis (viz.) efficacious, comprehensive, fixed, appropriative.*

2. **T**HE *act of vision, or intuition it self.* How great the pleasure will be that accrues to the blessed from this sight of Gods face, is very much also to be estimated from the *nature of the act*, as well as the *excellency of the object*. In as much as every vital act is *pleasant*, the *most perfect* act of the noblest faculty of the Soul, must needs be attended with *highest pleasure*. 'Tis a pleasure that most nearly imitates divine pleasure. And every thing is more perfect, as it more nearly approaches divine perfections.

Intel-

*Res sunt
perfectiores
vel imper-
fectiores
prout à sum-
ma perfecti-
one magis
vel minime
abcedunt.*

Intellectual pleasure is as much nobler than that of sense, as an immortal Spirit is more noble than a clod of earth. The pleasure of sense is drossie, feculent; the pleasure of the mind refined, and pure; *that* is faint and languid, *this* lively and vigorous; *that* scant and limited, *this* ample and enlarged; *that* temporary and fading, *this* durable and permanent; *that* flashy, superficial, *this* solid and intense; *that* raving and distracted, *this* calm and composed. Whence even that great (reputed) sensualist, Epicurus himself, professedly disclaims (or is represented as disclaiming) the conceit of placing happiness in sensual delights.

Pet. Molin.
de cogniti-
one Dei.

See Cul-
verwel of
the light of
nature,
speaking
(as I re-
member)
to this
purpose,
c. 17.

Quocirca
cum u-
niversæ vo-
luptatem
beatæ vitæ
esse finem

*dicimus; longè profectò absumus, ut eas voluptates, quæ sunt vi-
rorum luxu disfluentium, aut aliorum etiam, quatenus spectantur
in ipsa motione, actione frueri; quâ nimirum sensus jucundè
dulciterque afficitur, intelligamus; veluti quidam rem ignoran-
tes, aut à nobis dissentientes, aut alioquin adversum nos malè
affecti, interpretantur; Sed illud duntaxat (ut res eorum dica-
tur) intelligimus: non dolere corpore; anima non perturbari.*
Gassend. Syntag. Philos. Epicur. See his Epistle to Menoecus
in D. Laert.

And, as the pleasure of intellection excels
all the pleasure of sense; so doth the plea-
sure of intuition, excel all other intellectu-
al pleasure. Let us to this purpose, but
consider, generally, this way of knowing
things, and compare it with those two other
ways, by { Discourse,
 { Faith.

1. *Discourse.* I mean (that I be not mi-
staken by the vulgar Reader) the *discourse*

of the mind or ratiocination; that way of attaining the knowledg of things, by comparing one thing with another, considering their mutual relations, connexions, dependencies; and so arguing out, what was more doubtful and obscure, from what was more known and evident.

*Felix qui
potuit re-
rum cog-
noscere cau-
sas.*

To the altogether unlearned it will hardly be conceivable; and to the learned it need not be told, how high a gratification this employment of his Reason naturally yields to the mind of a man: When the harmonious contexture of truths with truths; the apt co-incidence, the secret links and junctures of co-herent notions, are clearly discerned; When *effects* are traced up to their *causes*; *Properties* lodged in their native *subjects*; *Things* sifted to their *Principles*. What a pleasure is it, when a man shall apprehend himself regularly led on (though but by a slender thred of discourse) through the Labyrinths of Nature; when still new discoveries are successfully made, every further enquiry ending in a further prospect, and every new Scene of things entertaining the mind with a fresh delight! How many have suffered a voluntary banishment from the world, as if they were wholly strangers, and unrelated to it; rejected the blandishments of sense; macerated themselves with unwearied studies, for this pleasure: making the ease and health of their bodies, to give place to the content and satisfaction of their minds!

But how much intuition hath the advantage,

tage, above this way of knowledg, may be seen in these two obvious respects.

i. 'Tis a more facile way of knowing. Here is no need of a busie search, a tiresome indagation, (the difficulty whereof makes the more slothful, rather trust than try), a chaining together of consequences. The Soul hath its cloathing (its vestment of light) upon as cheap terms as the Lillies theirs; doth neither toil nor spin for it: And yet Solomon, in all the glory of his (famed) wisdom, was not arrayed like it. This knowledg saves the expence of study; is instantaneuous, not successiue; The soul now sees more, at one view, in a moment, than before in a lifetime: As a man hath a speedier, and more grateful prospect of a pleasant Country, by placing himself in some commodious station, that commands the whole Region, than by travelling through it. 'Tis no pains to look upon what offers it self to my eye. Where there is a continued series of consequences, that lye naturally connected, the soul pleasantly observes this continuity; but views the whole frame, the whole length of the line, at once (so far as its limited capacity can extend), and needs not discuss every particle, severally, in this series of truths, and proceed *gradatim*, from the knowledg of one truth to another; in which case only one, at once, would be present to its view. It sees things that are connected, not because they are so: As a man, conveniently plac'd in some eminent station, may possibly

Nonnulli
radio inue-
tigande
veritatis,
cuiuslibet
opinionis
potius ig-
nari suc-
cumbunt;
quam in
exploran-
da verita-
te, parti-
cipi dili-
gentiâ,
perseverare
volunt.
Min. Fe-
lix. Oct.

* *Atque
ut homini
sedenti ad
ripam flu-
minis, so-
la aqua
præsens est*

*quæ ei hoc temporis punctulo observatur; eidem verò homini, totum
flumen præsens esset, si supra summam aeris regionem erectus, uno
aspectu fontem & ostium fluminis posset aspicere: Ità oculo Dei, &c.
P. Molinæus de cognit. Dei.*

see, at one view, all the successive parts of a gliding stream*: but he that sits by the waters side, not changing his place, sees the same parts, only because they succeed; and these that pass, make way for them that fol-

low, to come under his eye: So doth a learned man describe the unsuccessive knowledg of God; of which the glorified souls way of knowing, is an *imitation*; as the very words *seeing* and *beholding* (which it is so frequently set forth by in Scripture) do naturally import. Yet that, as to them, all ratiocination shall be excluded that state, I see no reason to admit; though with God it can have no place. And, as he is reckon'd to live a pleasanter life, that spends upon a plentiful estate; than he that gets his bread by the sweat of his brows: so this more easie way of knowing, must needs be reckon'd more pleasing. This knowledg is as *Jacob's* Venison, not hunted for, but brought to hand. The race is not here to the swift. The unlearned Ideot knows as much as the profoundest Rabbi (at least with as much satisfaction); and all arms are of an equal size; or are content with their own measure.

Herbert.

2. 'Tis more certain. For what do we use to reckon so certain as what we see with our

our eyes? *Better* (even in this respect) *is the sight of the eyes, than the wandering of the desire.* While, *here*, the mind is carried, with most earnest desire, to pursue knowledg, it very often mistakes its way, and miserably wanders. In our most wary ratiocinations, we many times shoot at rovers: But when we know by *this* Vision, our mark is immediately presented to our eye. We are in no danger to be imposed upon by delusive appearances of things. We look through no fallacious mediums, are held in no suspence; puzzled with no doubts, whether such consequences will hold, such conclusions be rightly inferr'd; and so are not retarded from giving a present unwavering assent. Here are no perplexing intricacies, no dubious hallucinations, or uncertain guesses. We see things, as they are, by a simple and undeceiving light, with both *subjective*, and *objective certainty*, being secure both from *doubt*, and *error*.

2. *Faith.* How magnificent things doth Scripture speak of this grace! which the experience also of such as have been wont to live by it (*i. e.* to make it the governing principle of their lives) doth abundantly confirm. How clear are its apprehensions? *'tis the evidence of things not seen:* How sweet its enjoyments? *whom not seeing ye love; and though now you see him not, yet believing, ye rejoyce, with joy unspeakable, and full of glory.*

Even the Heathen Theology hath magnified

1 Cor. xiii. 12.
Heb. xi. 1.
1 Pet. i. 8

* ἡ γνῶ-
σις, ἡ ἀρε-
τή, ἀλλ'
ἐπιδ' οὐτάς
ἐκείνους τῶν
θεῶν φασί,
&c. Pro-
clus in
Plat.
Theol.

Picus Mi-
rand.

fixed it above knowledg, "What is it (faith
"one) that unites us with the self-good-
"ness, and so joins us thereto, that it quiets
"or gives rest to all our action and moti-
"on? I will express it in one word; 'tis
"faith it self, which unspeakably and after
"a hidden manner, doth unite and conjoin
"happy souls with the self-good. For (faith
"he) it concerns us not, either in a way of
"Science*, or with any imperfection, to
"enquire after the good; but to behold our
"selves in the divine light, and so shutting
"our eyes, to be placed in the unknown and
"secret unity of beings.

And a latter Writer gives us this, as a
conclusion from that former Author, That
as *Faith*, which is *credulity*, is below *Sci-
ence*; so that *Faith*, which is truly so cal-
led, is, super-substantially, above Science
and intelligence, immediately uniting us to
God.

But 'tis evident, *intuitive* knowledg far ex-
ceeds even *Faith* also.

1. 'Tis *more distinct* and *clear*. Faith is
taking a thing upon report; *Who hath be-
lieved our report?* And they are more *gene-
ral, languid* apprehensions, we have of things
this way. Faith enters at the ear; *it comes
by hearing*. And if we compare the percepti-
ons of these two external senses, that of *hear-
ing*, and *sight*: the latter is unspeakably more
clear, and satisfying. He that hath know-
ledg of a forreign Country, only by report
of another, hath very indistinct apprehensi-
ons,

Ua. 53. 1.

Rom. 10.
15.

ons of it, in comparison of him who hath travel'd it himself. While the Queen of *Sheba* only heard of *Solomons* glory, she could not satisfy her self, without an *autoptia*, the sight of her own eye; and, when she saw it, the faith, the one half was not told her of what she now beheld. The Ear more slowly and gradually receives, and the Tongue more defectively expresses, to another, an account of things; than ones ocular inspection would take it in. But, as to the excellency of this intuitive knowledg above Faith; the comparison lies not, between knowing by the ministry of a more noble sense, and a less noble; but knowing by dependence on a less noble, and without dependence upon any at all. When God hath been pleased to afford discoveries, in that way of Vision, to men in the body, (his Prophets, &c.) he hath usually bound up their senses, by sleep, or trances; sense hath had no part or lot in this matter; Unto believing it must necessarily concur.

2. *More affective.* What we see, even with our external eye, much more powerfully moves our heart, than what we only give credit to, upon hear-say. The Queen of *Sheba* much admired, no doubt, *Solomons* famed splendor, and magnificence, while she only heard of it; but when she saw it, it puts her into an extasie; it ravish'd away her soul; she had no more spirit, &c. What would the sight of the Divine glory do, if God did not strengthen with all might: were there

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not as well *glorious power to support, as powerfull glory to transform!*

Job had *heard of God, by the hearing of the ear, but when once his eye saw him, (whether that were by the appearance of any sensible glory; which is probable enough, for 'tis said, the Lord answered him out of the whirlwind: or whether by a more immediate revelation, 'tis less-material) what work did it make in his soul!*

*The Devils believe, and tremble; so impressive are the pre-apprehensions of Judgment to come, and the consequents thereof, with them; yet their present torment, thence, is no torment, in comparison (art thou come to torment us before the time?) of what they expect. Let wicked men consider this, (they will have their intuition in hell too); were your belief, and terror thereupon, with reference to the eternal Judgment, and the impending wrath of God, equal to what the Devils themselves have, upon the same account; actual sensation will make you more exceed your selves in point of misery, than the Devils do now exceed you. There is, no doubt, a proportionable difference between the impressions of present Faith, and future Vision, with holy Souls. Now, *not seeing, yet believing, they rejoyce, with joy unspeakable: Their present joy cannot be spoken; their future then cannot be thought!* Experience daily tells us; how greatly, sensible, present objects have the advantage upon us, beyond those that are spiritual and distant*

distant, though infinitely more excellent and important. When the tables are turned, the now sensible things disappear; a new scene of things invisible and eternal, is immediately presented to our view; when the excellency of the objects, the disposedness of the subjects, the nature of the act, shall all multiply the advantages on this part, How affective will this vision be, beyond what we have ever found the faint apprehensions of our so much disadvantaged faith to amount to? A kind message from an indulgent Father, to his far-distant Son, informing of his welfare, and yet continuing love, will much affect; but the sight of his Fathers face, will even transport, and overcome him with joy.

But further consider this intuition a little more particularly and absolutely in it self. So, you may take this somewhat distincter account of it, in some few particulars, corresponding to those, by which the object (the glory to be beheld), was lately characterized.

1. *It will be a vigorous efficacious intuition*; as that which it beholds is *the most excellent; even the divine glory*. Such an object cannot be beheld, but with an eye full of lively vigour; a sparkling, a radiant eye: A weak eye would be struck blind, would fail, and be closed up at the first glance. We must suppose, then, this vision to be accompanied with the highest vitality, the strongest energy, a mighty plenitude of Spirit,

rit, and Power ; no less than the divine : Nothing but the *divine power* can sufficiently fortifie the Soul to behold *divine glory*. When the Apostle speaks only of his desire of glory, *he that hath wrought us to this self-same thing* (saith he) *is God* ; he that hath moulded us, suitably framed us (as the word signifieth) for this thing, *is God* : 'tis the work of a Deity to make a Soul desire Glory : certainly then, 'tis his work to give the power of beholding it. And by how much the more of *power*, so much the more of *pleasure* in this Vision. *Weak sight* would afford but *languid joy* : But when the whole Soul, animated with *divine power* and life, shall seat it self in the eye ; when it shall be as it were, *all eye*, (as one said of God, whom now it perfectly imitates) and be wholly intent upon Vision ; apply it self thereto with all its might, as its only business ; What satisfying joys doth it, now, taste ! renewed by every repeated view ! How doth it now, as it were, prey upon glory ; as the eye of the Eagle upon the beams of the Sun ! We meet with the expression of *aures bibulae* ; here will be *oculi bibuli*, thirsty eyes : A Soul ready to drink in glory at the eye. If vision be by intromission, what *attractive eyes* are here, drawing in glory, feeding upon glory ? If by extramission, what piercing darting eyes, *sending forth* the Soul at every look to embrace the glorious object.

There is a great power that now attends
real-

S. Hieronym.
nym.

realizing thoughts of God: whether it appear in the consequent working of the Soul directly towards God; or by way of reflection upon it self. If directly towards God; how mightily is he admired! *Who is a God like unto thee?* If by reflection upon our own sin, and vileness; how deeply doth it humble!—*Now mine eye seeth thee, therefore I abhor my self—Wo is me, I am undone,—Mine eyes have seen the Lord of glory.* If by way of reflection, upon our interest in him, or relation to him; how mightily doth it support and comfort! *I will look to the Lord,—my God will hear me.* How full of rich sense is that Scripture, *They looked to him, and were lightened!* One look cloath'd them with light; cast a glory upon their souls, filled them with life and joy: 'twas but a thought, the cast of an eye, and they were as full as hearts could hold. O, the power then of these heavenly visions! when we dwell in the views of that transforming glory!

Mic. 7. 7.

Psal. 34. 5.

2. *This will be a comprehensive intuition;* as its object is *entire glory*. I mean comparatively, not absolutely comprehensive. More of the divine glory will be comprehended, unspeakably, than before. 'Tis called, we know, by the Schoolmen, the knowledge of *Comprehensors*, in contradiction to that of *Viators*. We shall better be able to discern the divine excellencies *together*; have much more adequate conceptions; a fuller, and more compleat notion of God: We shall see him *as he is*. 'Tis too much observable,
how

2.

how in our present state, we are prejudiced by our partial conceptions of him; and what an *inequality* they cause in the temper of our Spirits.

For wicked men, *the very notion they have of God*, proves fatal to their Souls, or is of a most destructive tendency; because they comprehend not *together* what God hath revealed of himself. Most usually, they confine those few thoughts of God they have, only to his mercy; and that exclusively, as to his holiness, and justice; Hence their vain and mad presumption. The notion of an *unholy* (or a not-holy, and not-just) God, what wickedness would it not induce? *Thou thought'st I was altogether such an one as thyself*: a God after their own hearts; then the reins are let loose. More rarely, when the conscience of guilt hath arrested the self-condemned wretch, God is thought of, under no other notion, than of an irreconcilable enemy and avenger; as one thirsting after the blood of Souls, and that will admit of no attonement: So without all pretence, and so flatly contrary to all his discoveries of himself, do men dare to affix to him black and horrid characters, forged only out of the radicated and inveterate hatred of their own hearts against him, (that never takes up good thoughts of any one): only because they have no mind to acquaint themselves with him; and that they may have some colour for their affected distance: and so, perhaps, never return; but perish under

der an horrid, wilful despair.

And even the people of God themselves are too apt, sometimes, so wholly to fix their eye upon *love*, and *grace*, that they grow into an unbecoming, uncreaturely familiarity; while the thoughts of Infinite Majesty, adorable greatness, and glory, are asleep, sometimes, possibly, they apprehend vindictive justice, the indignation and jealousy of God against sin, (precluding meanwhile, the consideration of his indulgent compassions towards truly humble and penitent Souls) to that degree of affrightment, and dread; that they grow into an unchildlike strangeness towards him, and take little pleasure in drawing nigh to him.

But when, *now*, our eye shall take in the discovery of divine glory *equally*; how sweet, and satisfying a pleasure will arise from that grateful mixture of *reverent love*, *humble joy*, *modest confidence*, *meek courage*, *a prostrate magnanimity*, *a triumphant veneration*; a soul *shrinking before the divine glory into nothing*, yet *not contenting it self with any less enjoyment*, than of him, who is all in all!

There's nothing here in this complexion, or temper of Soul, but hath its warrant, in the various aspect of the face of God comprehensively beheld; nothing but what is (even by its suitableness) highly grateful, and pleasing.

The Blessedness of the Righteous.

3. 'Twill be fixed, steady intuition, as its object is permanent glory. The vision of God can neither *infer*, nor admit weariness. The eye cannot divert; its act is eternally delectable; and affords an unvariable, undecaying pleasure. Sensual delights soon end in loathing; quickly bring a glutting surfeit; and degenerate into torments, *when they are continued and unintermittent. A Philosopher in an Epistle which he writes to a friend, from the Court of *Dionysius*, where he was forceably detained, thus bemoans himself, "We are unhappy, O *An-tisthenes*, beyond measure; and how can "we but be unhappy, that are burdened by "the Tyrant every day, with sumptuous "feasts, plentiful computations, precious ointments, gorgeous apparel? and I knew as "soon as I came into this Island and City, "how unhappy my life would be. This is the nature and common condition of even the most pleasing sensible objects: They first tempt, then please a little, then disappoint, and lastly vex. The eye that beholds them, blasts them, quickly rifles and deflowers their glory; and views them with no more delight at first, than disdain afterwards. Creature-enjoyments have a bottom, are soon drained and drawn dry: hence there must be frequent diversions; other pleasures must be sought out; and are chosen, not because they are *better*, but because they are *new*.

This demonstrates the emptiness, and vanity

* *Proba istas, quæ voluptates vocantur, ubi modum transcenderint, pœnas esse.*
Sen. Ep. 83.
*Κακοὶ ἀπονομιῶν ἀντίθε-
τες, ἔμε-
τερος, &c.*
Socrati-
corum.
Epist. 9.

nity of the Creature. *Affection of variety* only proceeds from *sense of want*; and is a confession, upon trial, that there is not, in such an enjoyment, what was expected.

Proportionably, in the state of glory, A constant indeficient *fulness*, renders the blessed Soul undesirous of any change. There, is no need of varieties, or diversions: What did once please, can never cease to do so. This glory cannot fade or lose any thing of its attractive power. The *faculty* cannot languish, or lose the disposition, by which it is contempered and made proportionable thereto: Hence no weariness can ensue. What! a Soul in which the love of God is perfected, grow weary of beholding him! The Sun will sooner grow weary of shining; The touch'd Needle of turning it self to its wonted point; Every thing will sooner grow weary of its centre; and the most fundamental Laws of Nature be sooner antiquated, and made void for ever.

The eye of the fool, Solomon tells us, is in the ends of the earth; His only, is a rolling wandering eye, that knows not where to fix. Wisdom guides, and fixes the eye of the holy Soul; determines it unto God only: I will bless the Lord, who hath given me counsel, my reins also instruct me,—I have set the Lord always before me. Surely heaven will not render it less capable of dijudication; of passing a right judgment of the excellency

Prov. 17.

25.

Psal. 16.

7, 8.

lency and worth of things. And, here, a *rational* judgment will find no *want*; and an *irrational* will find no *place*. Therefore, as *permanent* glory will certainly infer a *perpetual* vision; perpetuated vision will as certainly perpetuate the Souls satisfaction, and blessedness.

4. 'Twill be a *possessive intuition*: as 'tis an *appropriate glory* which it pitches upon. 'Twill be the language of *every look*, *This glory is mine*. The soul looks not upon it shily, as if it had nothing to do with it; or with slight and careless glances: but the very posture of its eye, speaks its interest, and proclaims the pretensions it hath to this glory. With how different an aspect, doth a *stranger*, passing by, and the *owner*, look upon the same house, the same lands? A mans eye lays his claim for him, and avowes his right. A grateful object that one can say is *his own*, he arrests it with his eye: So do Saints with appropriative looks, behold their God, and the Divine Glory. Even with such an eye as he was wont to behold them; *To this man will I look*, &c. (that is, as the place of my rest, mentioned before); he designs him with his eye. Which is the import of that expression, *The Lord knows who are his*; his eye marks them out; owns them as his own: as concerning others, whom he *disowns*, the phrase is, *I know you not*. And how vastly different is such an intuition, from that, when I look upon a thing, with an hungry lingring eye, which I must never enjoy,

Isa. 66. 1,
2.

2 Tim. 2.
19.

enjoy, or never expect to be the better for. This vision is *fruitive*; unites the Soul with the blessed object: Which kind of sight is meant, when actual blessedness is, so often, exprest by seeing God.

We see then what Vision, the sight of Gods face, contributes to the satisfaction of blessed Souls.

K

C H A P.

C H A P. VII.

Wherein assimilation (*the likeness or glory of God imprest*) contributes unto satisfaction : *Where is particularly propounded to be shewn; What pleasure it involves, what it disposes too: What it involves in the esse of it, what in the cognosci.* 1. *The pleasure of being like God, discovered.* 1. *Shewing, concerning the Image of God (generally considered) that it is the Souls health and soundness restored; that it is a Vital, an intimate, a connatural, a perfect image.*

2. **O**UR next business is to discover, what *assimilation, or the impressed likeness of God*, may further add to this satisfied state; or, what satisfying pleasure the blessed Soul finds in this, that it is *like God*.

And here we are distinctly to enquire into, The pleasure which such an *assimilation to God* *involves in it self,*
tends and disposes to.

1. *The*

1. The pleasure it involves in it self; or, which is taken in it, abstractly considered; Which we may more particularly unfold, by shewing

The pleasure involved, { 1. In being like God.
2. In knowing or reflecting upon the same.

The { Esse, { Of this assimilation.
Cognosci

1. The pleasure in being like God; Which may be discovered both by a general consideration hereof, and by instancing in some particulars, wherein blessed Souls shall be like him.

1. It is obvious to suppose an inexpressible pleasure, in the very feeling, the inward sensation, the holy Soul will have of that happy frame in general, whereinto it is now brought; That joyful harmony, that entire rectitude it finds within it self. You may as soon separate light from a Sun-beam, as pleasure from such a state.

This likeness or conformity to God is an *εὐκρασία*, a perfect temperament; an athletic healthiness; a strong sound constitution of Soul. Do but imagine, what it is to a mans body, after a wasting sickness, to find himself well. Frame a notion of the pleasure of health and soundness, when both, all the parts and members of the body are in their proper places and proportions; and a live-

ly, active vigour, a sprightly strength possesses every part, and actuates the whole; how pleasant is this temper! If we were *all body*, there could be no greater felicity than this. But by how much the more noble any creature is, so is it capable of more exquisite pains, or pleasures. * Sin is the sickness and disease of the Soul; enfeebles all its powers, exhausts its vigour, wastes its strength. You know the restless tossings, the

* Τιμω-
τερον ψυ-
χῇ σώμα-
τος, τὸ δὲ
τιμωτέ-
ρον ἀγα-
θὸν μείζον, τὸ δὲ τῷ μείζονι, ἀγαθὸν ἐπαισιον, μείζον κακόν.
ἀγαθὸν δὲ μείζον ὑγεία ψυχῆς ὑγεία σώματος, μείζον ἐν κα-
κόν, νόσος ψυχῆς, νόσος σώματος, νόσος ψυχῆς μοχθηρία, &c. Max:
Tyr: dissert. 41.

weary rollings to and fro, of a diseased languishing body; such is the case of a sinful Soul. Let it but seriously bethink it self, and then speak its own sense, (but here is the malignity of the disease, it cannot be serious, it always raves); What will it be? (O *I can take no rest*)! The way of wickedness is called * *a way of pain*: Sinners would find it so, if the violence of the disease had not bereft them of sense; *Nothing savors with me; I can take comfort in nothing. The wicked is as a troubled Sea* (as their name imports) *that cannot rest, whose waters, &c.* The Image of God, renewed in holiness and righteousness, is health restored, after such a consuming sickness; which, when we awake, when all the drowsiness that attends our disease is shaken off, we find to be perfect. *The fear of the Lord* (an ordinary Paraphrase
of

* ררר
ררר
Psal. 139.
24:
ררר
Isa. 57. 20.
Hinc illud
& tedium
& displicentia sui,
& nuf-
quam resi-
dentis ani-
mi volunta-
tio, &c.
Sen. de
Tranqu.
animi.

of holiness or piety) is said to be *health to the navel, and marrow to the bones*. Our Lord Jesus invites *wearied sinners to come to him, to take his yoke on them, to learn of him*, (that is, to imitate him, to be like him) and promises they *shall find rest to their souls*. How often do we find *grace, and peace*, in conjunction, in the Apostles salutations and benedictions? We are told that the ways of divine wisdom (i. e. which it prescribeth) are all *pleasantness and peace*. That in keeping the *Commandments of God, there is great reward*. That they are not *grievous*, i. e. (for there seems to be a Meiosis in the expression) are joyous, pleasant. And what are his Commandments, but those expresses of himself, wherein we are to be *like him*, and conform to his will? *The Kingdom of God* (that holy order which he settles in the spirits of men; his Law transcribed and impressed upon the Soul; which is nothing else but its conformation and likeness to himself:) *is righteousness, and then peace*. The *οὐρανία Πνεύματος*, That *notion, and judgment, and favour of things*; that excellent temper of mind and heart; (for that is the extent of the expression) whereof the holy Spirit of God is both the author and pattern, is *life, and peace*; involves them in it self. When one thing is thus, in *casu recto*, predicated of another, it speaks their most intimate connexion, as *Rom. 14. 17*, above; so *1 Joh. 5. 3*. *This is love that, &c.* So here, such a *mind is life and peace* (though the *copula* be not in the original,

Matt. 11.
28.

Prov. 3. 13.
Psal. 19.
1 Joh 5. 3.

Rom. 14.
17.

Rom. 8. 6:

Invulnerable est non quod non feritur, sed quod non læditur. Sen. de constantia sapientis, sive quod in sapientem non cadit injuria. Rom. 13. 12. Integer vir te scelerisque parvus, &c. Hor. Munusai.

ginal, it is fitly supply'd in the translation); You cannot separate (*q. d.*) life and peace from such a mind: It hath no principle of death, or trouble in it. Let such as know any thing of this blessed temper and complexion of Soul, compare this Scripture, and their own experience together; when, at any time, they find their Souls under the blessed Empire and dominion of a spiritual mind; when spirituality wholly rules and denominates them: Are not their Souls the very region of life and peace? both these in conjunction, *life* and *peace*? not raging life, not stupid peace; but a placid peaceful life, a vital vigorous rest and peace: 'tis not the life of a fury, nor peace of a stone: life that hath peace in it, and peace that hath life in it. Now can the Soul say, *I feel my self well*; All is now well with me. Nothing afflicts the Spiritual mind, so far, and while 'tis such: 'Tis wrapt up, and cloath'd in its own innocency and purity; and hereby become invulnerable, not liable to hurtful impressions. Holiness (under the name of light, for that is, by the context, the evident meaning of the word there) is by the Apostle spoken of as the Christians *armour*. Put on, saith he, *the armour of light*, (in opposition to the works of darkneis, which he had mentioned immediately before); *Strange armour*! that a man may see through. A good mans armour is, that *he needs none*: his armour is an open breast; that he can expose himself; is fearless of any harm. *Who is he that shall harm*

harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good? It should be read, *imitators*; so the word signifies: And so, whereas *following* is either of a *pattern*, or an *end*; the former must be meant here, by the natural importance of that word. And hence, by [*that which is good*] is not to be understood *created goodness*; for it is not enough to *imitate* that goodness; for so we must *be good*; but the words are capable of being read, *him that is good*, or (which is all one) *the good*.

Τὸ ἀγαθόν.

* And so 'tis the *increate good*, the blessed God himself, formally considered under the notion of good, Nothing can harm you, if you be *like God*; that's the plain sense of this Scripture. Likeness to God, is armour of proof, i. e. an imitation of him, viz. in his moral goodness; which holiness (as a general name of it) comprehends. A person truly like God, is secure from any external violence; so far, as that it shall never be able to invade his Spirit. He is, in spirit, far raised above the tempestuous, stormy Region, and converses where winds and clouds have no place.

* As Plato and his followers used the expression, τὸ ἀγαθόν, fully, according to the sense of Mat. 19. 17.

Nor can (so far as this temper of Soul prevails) any evil grow upon such a mind within it self. *It is life and peace*; It is *light and purity*; for 'tis the image, the similitude of God. *God is light, and with him is no darkness at all*. Holy Souls were *darkness*, but they are *light in the Lord*. He the Father of lights, *They the children of light*. *They were darkness*: not, in the dark; but, (in

1 Joh. 1.

Ephes. 3
James 1

the abstract) [darkness]: as if that were their whole nature; and they nothing else but an impure mass of conglobated darkness. So, *Ye are light*: as if they were *that*, and nothing else; nothing but a Sphere of light.

Σφαῖρα
ψυχῆς
αὐτοειδῆς,
ὅταν μὴτε

ἐκτείνῃται ἐπὶ τι, μὴτε ὥσω σωτρεύχῃ, μὴτε συνίζανῃ, ἀλλὰ
φωτὶ λάμπῃται, &c. Marc. Antonin. lib. 11.

Why suppose we such a thing, as an entire Sphere of nothing else but pure light? What can work any disturbance here? or raise a storm within it? A calm, serene thing: perfectly homogeneous, void of contrariety, or any self-repugnant quality: How can it disquiet it self?

We cannot yet say, that thus it is with holy Souls in their present state, according to the highest literal import of these words, *Ye are light*: But thus it will be when they awake; when they are satisfied with this likeness. They shall then be like God fully, and throughout. O the joy and pleasure of a Soul made after such a similitude! Now glory is become as it were *their being*; they are glorified. *Glory is revealed into them*, transfused throughout them. Every thing that is conceivable under the notion of an excellency, competent to created nature, is now to be found with them; and they have it in-wrought into their very beings. So that in a true sense it may be said (that *they are light*); they not only *have* such excellencies, but

but they *are* them. As the Moralist saith of the wise, or virtuous man, that he not so properly *hath* all things, as *is* all things. 'Tis said of man, in respect of his *naturals*, he *is* the image and glory of God. As for his *supernatural excellencies*, though they are not *essential* to man, they are more *expressive* of God; and are now become so *inseparable* from the nature of man too, in this his glorified state, that he can as soon cease to be *intelligent*, as *holy*. The image of God, even in this respect, is not separable from him: nor blessedness (surely) from this image. As the divine excellencies, being in their infinite fulness in God, are his own blessedness: so is the likeness, the participation of them in the Soul, that now bears this image, its blessedness. Nothing can be necessary to its full satisfaction, which it hath not in it self, by a gracious vouchsafement, and communication. The good man (in that degree which his present state admits of), Solomon tells us, *is satisfied from himself*: he doth not need to traverse the world, to seek his happiness abroad; he hath the matter of satisfaction (even that goodness which he is now enrich'd with) in his own breast and bosom: Yet he hath it all by participation from the *fountain-goodness*. But that *participated goodness* is so intimately one with him, as sufficiently warrants and makes good the assertion, *He is satisfied from himself*: viz. from himself, not primarily, or independently; but by derivation from him, who is all in all, and more intimate to us, than we

Omnia non tam habere quam esse.
Sen.

1 Cor. II. 7.

Prov. 14. 14.

Intimo nostro intimior.
Esse nostrum laudabile.
Gibieuf. de liberate, ex Plat. & Aug.

we to our selves. And what is that participated goodness, but a degree of the *divine likeness*? But, when that goodness shall be fully participated; when this image and imitation of the divine goodness, shall be compleat, and intire; then shall we know the rich exuberant sense of those words. How fully will this image or likeness satisfie then?

And yet more distinctly, we may apprehend how satisfying this likeness (or image impress) will be, if (a little further deferring the view of the particulars of this likeness which we have designed to instance in) we consider these general properties of it.

1. *'Tis a vital image*: not the image only of him that lives, *the living God*: but it is his *living* and soul-quickning image. 'Tis the likeness of him, in that very respect; an imitation, and participation of the life of God; by which, once revived, the Soul lives that was dead before. 'Tis not a dead picture, a dumb shew, an unmoving Statue; but a living, speaking, walking image: that wherewith the Child is like the Father: the very life of the subject where it is; and by which it lives *as God*, speaks and acts conformably to him. An image, not such a one as is drawn with a Pencil, that expresses only colour and figure; but such a one as is seen in a Glass, that represents life and motion (as was noted from a worthy Author before). 'Tis even (in its first and more imperfect draught) an analogical participation

*Sic oculos,
sic ille manus,
sic ora
ferebat.*

The Blessedness of the Righteous.

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tion (as we must understand it) of the *divine* nature; before which first tincture (those prelude touches of it upon the Spirit of man), his former state is spoken of as an *alienation from the life of God*; as having no interest, no communion therein. The *putting on of the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness*, is presently mentioned, in direct opposition to that dismal state, implying *that* to be a participation of the divine life: And certainly, so far as it is so, 'tis a participation of the divine blessedness too.

2 Pet. 3.

Eph. 4. 18.

V. 23, 24.

2. *'Tis an image most intimate*, therefore, to its *subject*. Glory it is: but not a superficial skin-deep glory; such as shone in *Moses* his face, which he covered with a Vail. 'Tis *thoroughly transformative*; changes the Soul throughout; not in external appearance, but in its very nature. All outward imbellishments would add little felicity to a putrid corrupt Soul. *That* would be but painting a Sepulchre: *This* adds ornament unto life; and both, especially to the inward man. 'Tis not *paint* in the *face*, while *death* is at the *heart*; but 'tis the radication of such a principle within, as will soon form and temper the man universally to it self. 'Tis glory, blessedness *participated*, brought home and lodged in a mans own Soul, in his own bosom; he cannot then but be satisfied. A man may have a rich stock of outward comforts, and while he hath no heart to enjoy them, be never the happier. But 'tis impossible,

possible, that happiness should be thus lodged in his Soul, made so intimate, and one with him; and yet, that he should not be satisfied, not be happy.

3. *An image connatural to the spirit of man.* Not a thing *alien*, and foreign to his nature, put into him purposely, as it were, to torment and vex him; but an ancient well-known inhabitant, that had place in him from the beginning. Sin is the injurious intruder; which therefore puts the Soul into a commotion, and permits it not to rest, while it hath any being there. This Image calms it, restores it, works a peaceful, orderly composure, within; returns it, to it self, to its pristine blessed state; being reseatd there, as in its proper, primitive subject.

For though this image, in respect of corrupted nature, be *supernatural*; in respect of institute, and undefiled nature, it was, in a true sense, *natural* (as hath been demonstrated by divers of ours against the Papists; and, upon the matter, yielded by some of the more moderate among themselves *).

* As may be seen by comparing what *Estius* says to the two questions, 1. *An gratia fuerit*

primo hominē naturalis? 2. *utrum originalis iustitia fuerit hominē supernaturalis?* 1. 2. dist. 25.

At least it was *connate* with humane nature, *consentaneous* to it, and *perfective* of it. (We are speaking, it must be remembred, of that part of the divine Image, that consists in moral excellencies; there being another part of it, as hath been said, that is, even in the strictest sense, *natural*).

There

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There is nothing in the whole moral Law of God, (in conformity whereunto this Image did, *ab origine*, consist,) nothing of what he requires from man, that is at all destructive of his being, prejudicial to his comforts, repugnant to his most innate principles: nothing that clashes with his reason, or, is contrary to his interest: or, that is not, most directly, conservative of his being and comforts, agreeable to his most rational principles, subservient to his best and truest interest. For what *doth God the Lord require*, but *fear and love*, service, and holy walking, from an entire and undivided Soul? What, but what is good; not only in it self, but for us; and, in respect whereof, his Law is said to be *holy, just, and good*?

Deut. 10.
12.
Mic. 6. 8.

Rom. 7. 12

And what he *requireth*, he *impresseth*. This *Law, written in the heart*, is this *likeness*.

How grateful then will it be, when, after a long extermination and exile, it returns and re-possesses the Soul, is recognized by it, becomes to it *a new nature*, (yea, even a divine) *a vital, living Law, the Law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus*? What grievance, or burden, is it to do the dictates of nature? actions that easily and freely flow from their own principles? and, when blessedness it self is infolded in those very acts and inclinations? How infinitely satisfying and delightful will it be, when the Soul shall find it self connaturalized to every thing in its duty; and shall have no other duty incumbent on it

Rom. 8. 2

it

it than to be happy ! when it shall need no arguments, and exhortations to love God ; nor need be urged and prest, as heretofore, to mind him, to fear before him ! when love, and reverence and adoration, and praise ; when delight, and joy, shall be all natural acts : Can you separate this, in your own thoughts, from the highest satisfaction ?

4. *This image will be, now, perfect* : Every way, fully perfect.

First, *In all its parts* ; as it is in the first instant of the Souls entrance into the state of regeneration (the womb of Grace knows no defective maimed births). And yet here is no little advantage, as to this kind of perfection. For now those lively lineaments of the new creature *all appear*, which were much obscured before ; every line of glory is conspicuous ; every character legible ; the whole entire frame of this image is, in its exact Symmetry and apt proportions, visible at once. And 'tis an unspeakable addition to the pleasure of so excellent a temper of spirit, that accreus from the discernable entireness of it. Heretofore, some gracious dispositions have been to seek, (through the present prevalence of some corruption or temptation) when there was most need and occasion for their being reduced into act. Hence the reward and pleasure of the act, and improvement of the principle, were lost together. Now, the Soul will be *equally disposed*, to every holy exercise that shall be suitable to its state. Its temper shall be *even and Symmetrical* ;

metral; Its motions *uniform*, and agreeable: Nothing done out of season; Nothing seasonable omitted, for want of a present disposition of spirit thereto. There will be not only an *habitual*, but *actnal entireness* of the frame of holiness, in the blessed Soul.

2. Again, this Image will be *perfect in degree*; so as to *exclude* all degrees of its contrary, and to *include* all degrees of it self. There will now be no longer any collutation with contrary principles; no law in the members warring against the law of the mind; no lustings of the flesh against the Spirit. That war is now ended in a glorious victory, and eternal peace. There will be no remaining blindness of mind, nor error of judgment, nor perverseness of will, nor irregularity or rebellion of affections: no ignorance of God, no averfation from him, or disaffection towards him. This likeness removes all culpable *dissimilitude* or *unlikeness*. This communicated glory fills up the whole Soul, causes all clouds and darkness to vanish, leaves no place for any thing that is vile or inglorious; 'tis pure glory, free from mixture of any thing that is alien to it.

And it is it self *full*. The Soul is replenish'd, not with airy, evanid shadows; but with substantial, solid glory, a massive weighty glory, (for I know not but subjective glory may be taken in within the significancy of that known Scripture, if it be not more principally intended: in as much as the

2 Cor. 4.
17.

2 Cor. 3.
18.

* *Purum
est quod est
plenum sui,
& quod
minimum
habet alie-
ni.*

the Text speaks of a glory to be wrought out by afflictions, which are the files and furnaces, as it were, to polish or refine the Soul into a glorious frame). 'Tis cumulated glory, glory added to glory. Here 'tis growing progressive glory, *we are changed into the same image from glory to glory*. It shall, now, be stable, consistent glory; that carries a self-fulness with it (which some include also in the notion of purity *): 'tis full of it self, includes every degree requisite to its own perfection. God hath now put the last hand to this glorious Image, added to it its ultimate accomplishments. Now, a conformity to Christ, even in the resurrection from the dead, in his glorious state, is fully attained. That prize of the high calling of God is now won. And the humble sense of not having *attained as yet*, and of not being *already perfect* (in which humility, the foundation of the Temple of God in a Saint is laid, and the building raised) is turned into joyful acclamations, *Grace, Grace!* for the laying on of the top-stone, the finishing of this glorious work.

And when this Temple is filled with the glory of the Lord, the Soul it self replenished with the divine fulness; will not its joy be full too? For here is no sacrifice to be offered but that of praise, and joy is the proper seasoning for that sacrifice.

Now, the new creature hath arrived to the measure of the stature of a perfect man in Christ Jesus. The first formation of this

this Spiritual (as well as of the natural) man, was hidden and secret; it was curiously wrought, and in a way no more liable to observation, than that of framing the Child in the Womb; as that is as hidden as the concoction of Minerals, or precious stones, in the lower parts of the earth (no secrets of Nature can outvie the Mysteries of godliness). Its *growth* is also by very insensible degrees, as it is with the products of nature: but its arrival to perfection is infinitely more strange, than any thing in nature ever was. How sudden and wonderful is the change; when, in the twinkling of an eye, the blessed Soul instantly awakes out of drowsie languishings, and miserable weakness, into perfect strength and vigour!

As a man is, so is his strength; and as his strength is, so is his joy and pleasure. The Sun is said to go forth *as a strong man, rejoicing to run his race*. When a man goes, in the fulness of his strength, upon any enterprise; how do his blood and spirits triumph beforehand! no motion of hand, or foot, is without a sensible delight. The strength of a mans Spirit is, unspeakably, more than that of the outward man; its faculties and powers more refined and raised: and hence are rational or intellectual exercises and operations, much more delightful than corporal ones can be.

But (still, as the man is, so is his strength) 'tis an incomparably greater strength that attends the *heaven-born man*. This man born

of God, begotten of God, after his own likeness; this *Hero*, this Son of God, was born to Conflicts, to Victories, to Triumphs. While he is yet but in his growing age, *he overcomes the world* (as *Hercules* the Serpents in his Cradle); overcomes the wicked one, and is at last more than Conqueror. A mighty power attends godliness; *a Spirit of power, and of a sound mind*: but how much this divine creature grows, so much the more like God: and, being perfect, conflicts cease; (he had overcome and won the Crown before). And, now, all his strength runs out into acts of pleasure. Now, when he shall go forth in his might to love God, (as we are required to love him now with all our might) and every act of *praise* shall be an act of *power*, done with a fulness of strength (as 'tis said their praises, at the bringing home of the Ark, were with all their might) O! what will the pleasure be that shall accompany this state of perfection! Perfect power and perfect pleasure are here met, and shall for ever dwell together, and be always commensurate to one another. They are so, here, in their imperfect state: our feeble, spiritless duties, weak, dead prayers; they have no more sweetness than strength, no more pleasure than power in them. Therefore we are listless, and have no mind to duties, as we find we are more frequently destitute of a spiritual liveliness and vigour therein. When a spirit of might and power goes on with us in the wonted course of
our

our converses with God, we then forecast opportunities, and gladly welcome the season, when it *extraordinarily* occurs, of drawing nigh to him. It cannot be thought, that the connexion and proportion between these should fail in glory; or that, when every thing else is perfect, the blessed Soul it self made perfect, even as God himself is perfect (in this bearing his likeness), should be unlike him in bliss; or its satisfaction be imperfect.

L 2

CHAP.

C H A P. VIII.

The satisfaction carried in the glory of God impressed, further shew'n by instances; Certain particulars of this impression instanc't in: A dependent frame of Spirit, Subjection, or self-devoting, Love, Purity, Liberty, Tranquility.

BUT besides the *general* consideration of *this likeness*, we shall *instance* in some of the *particular excellencies* comprehended in it, wherein the blessed shall imitate and resemble God: whence we may further estimate the pleasure and satisfaction, that *being like God* will afford. Only here let it be remembred, that as we all along in this discourse, speak of likeness to God in respect of *moral excellencies*: so by likeness to him, in respect of *these*, we understand, not only a *participation* of those which are *communicable*; but a *correspondent impress* also, as to those that are *incommunicable*; as hath been more distinctly opened in the Propositions concerning this likeness: Which being premised, I shall give instances of both kinds, to discover somewhat of the inexpressible pleasure of being thus conformed to God.

And

And here, pretermittting the impress of knowledg, of which we have spoken under the former head of vision; we shall instance,

1. *In a dependent frame of Spirit*: which is the proper impress of *the divine all-sufficiency, and self-fulness*, duly apprehended by the blessed Soul. It is not easie to conceive a higher pleasure, than *this*, competible to a creature, *The pleasure of dependence*; yea, this is an higher than we can conceive. Dependence (which speaks the creatures *union* or habitude to its principle, as the subserviency which imports its habitude to its end) is twofold.

1. *Natural*: which is common and essential to all creatures; even when no such thing is thought on, or considered by them. The Creatures live, move, and have their beings in God, whether they think of it or no.

2. *Voluntary or rational*: which is *de facto*, peculiar; and *de jure*, common, to reasonable creatures as such. A dependence that is, *involuntary*, elective; and, with a foregoing reason, (which I understand by *elective*, not a liberty of doing, or not doing it) and concomitant consideration of what we do, and animadversion of our own act: when knowingly and willingly, understanding our selves in what we do, we *go out of our selves, and live in God*. This is the dependence of which I speak. And it cannot but be attended with transcendent pleasure in that other State,

when that knowledg and animadversion shall be clear and perfect: Both, as this dependence imports,

A { Nullifying of self.
Magnifying (I may call it Omnifying)
of God, a making him all in all.

As it imports (which it doth most evidently), a *self-annihilation*, a *pure nullifying of self*, 'Tis a continual recognition of my own nothingness, A momentarily, iterated confession, that my whole being is nothing, but a meer puff of precarious breath, a bubble rais'd from nothing by the arbitrary *fiat* of the great Creator; reducible, had he so pleased, any moment, to nothing again. These are true and just acknowledgments, and to a well-tempered Soul infinitely pleasant, when the state of the case is thoroughly understood (as now it is), and it hath the apprehension clear; how the creation is sustained, how, and upon what terms its own being, life and blessedness are continued to it; that it is, by its self, nothing; and that it is, every moment, determinable upon the constancy of the Creators Will, that it is not *simply nothing*. 'Tis not possible, that any thing should hinder this consideration from being eternally delightful; but that diabolical uncreaturely *Pride*, that is long since banish'd Heaven, and that banish'd its very subjects thence also. Nothing can suit that temper, but *to be a God*; to be wholly independent; to be its own

own sufficiency. The thoughts of living at the will and pleasure of another, are grating; but they are only grating to a proud heart, which, here, hath no place. A Soul naturalized to humiliations, accustomed to prostrations, and self-abasements, trained up in acts of mortification, and that was brought to glory, through a continued course and series of self-denial; that, ever since it first came to know it self, was wont to depend for every moments breath, for every glimpse of light, for every fresh influence (*I live, yet not I—*): with what pleasure doth it, now, as it were vanish before the Lord! what delight doth it take to diminish it self, and as it were *disappear*; to contract and shrivel up it self, to shrink even into a point, into a nothing, in the presence of the divine glory; that it may be *all in all*! Things are now *pleasant* (to the soul, *in its right mind*) as they are *suitable*; as they carry a comeliness and congruity in them: And nothing, now, appears more *becoming*, than such a self-annihilation. The distances of *Creator* and *Creature*, of *Infinite* and *Finite*, of a *necessary* and *arbitrary* being, of a *self-originated* and a *derived* being, of what was *from everlasting* and what *had a beginning*; are now better understood than ever. And the Soul by how much it is, now, come *nearer* to God, is more apprehensive of its *distance*. And such a frame and posture doth, hence, please it best, as doth most fitly correspond thereto. Nothing is so pleasing to it, as to be *as it ought*,

ought. That temper is most *grateful* that is most *proper*, and which best agrees with its state. Dependence therefore is greatly pleasing, as it is a *self-nullifying* thing. And yet it is, in this respect, pleasing, but as a means to a further end. The pleasure that attends it, is *higher* and more intense, according as it more *immediately* attains that end, *viz.*

The magnifying and exalting of God: which is the most connatural thing to the holy Soul; the most fundamental and deeply *imprest* Law of the new Creature. *Self* gives place, that God may take it; becomes *nothing*, that he may be *all*: it vanishes, that his glory may shine the brighter.

Dependence gives God his *proper* glory. 'Tis the peculiar honour and prerogative of a *Deity*, to have a world of Creatures hanging upon it, staying themselves upon it; to be the *fulcrum*, the *centre* of a lapsing Creation. When this dependence is *voluntary* and *intelligent*, it carries in it a more explicate owning and acknowledgment of God. By how much more this is the distinct and actual sense of my Soul, *Lord, I cannot live but by thee*: so much the more openly and plainly do I speak it out, *Lord, thou art God alone*; thou art *The fulness of life and being*; *The only root and spring of life*; *The Everlasting I AM*; *The being of beings*.

How unspeakably pleasant, to a holy Soul, will such a perpetual agnition or acknowledgment of God be! when the perpetuation
of

of its being, shall be nothing else than a perpetuation of this acknowledgment; when every renewed aspiration, every motion, every pulse of the glorified Soul, shall be but a repetition of it; when it shall find, in itself, in the eternity of life, that everlasting state of life which it now possesses, to be nothing else than an everlasting testimony *that God is God: He is so; for, I am, I live, I act, I have the power to love him; none of which could otherwise be.* When amongst the innumerable myriads of the heavenly host, this shall be the mutual alternate testimony of each to all the rest, throughout eternity, will not this be pleasant? When each shall *feel* continually, the fresh illapses and incomes of God, the power and sweetness of divine influences, the enlivening vigour of that vital breath, and find in themselves, *Thus we live and are sustained:* and are yet as secure, touching the continuance of this state of life, as if every one were a *God to himself;* and did each one possess an entire God-head. When their sensible dependence on him, in their glorified state, shall be his perpetual triumph over all the imaginary Deities, the fancied *Numina*, wherewith he was heretofore provoked to jealousy: and he shall now have no rival left, but be acknowledged and known, to be *all in all.* How pleasant will it then be, as it were, to lose themselves in him! and to be swallowed up in the overcoming sense of his boundless, al sufficient, every-where flowing fulness!

And

The Blessedness of the Righteous.

And then add to this; they do by this dependence actually make this fulness of God their own. They are now met in one common principle of life and blessedness, that is sufficient for them all. They no longer live a life of care, are perpetually exempt from solicitous thoughts, which here they could not perfectly attain to in their earthly state. They have nothing to do but to *depend*; to live upon a present *self-sufficient good*, which alone is enough to replenish all desires: else it were not self-sufficient.

* Τὸ δὲ
αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ
τίθεμεν, ὅ
πρὸς αὐτὸν
αἰσθητὸν
πρὸς τὸν
θεόν, καὶ μὴ
ἐνδὸς ἐν-
δὲς.
Arist. de
mor. lib. I.
c. 4.

* How can we divide, in our most abstractive thoughts, the highest pleasure, the fullest satisfaction, from this dependence? 'Tis to live at the rate of a God; a God-like life: A living upon immense fulness, as he lives.

2. *Subjection*; which I place next to *dependence*, as being of the same allay. The product of imprest Sovereignty; as the *other*, of *alsufficient fulness*: Both impressions upon the creature, corresponding to somewhat in God, most incommunicably appropriate to him.

This is the Souls real and practical acknowledgment of the Supream Majesty; Its homage to its Maker; Its self-dedication: Than which nothing more suits the *state* of a *creature*, or the *spirit of a Saint*. And as it is suitable, 'tis pleasant. 'Tis that by which the blessed Soul becomes, in its own sense, a consecrated thing, a devoted thing, sacred to God: its very life and whole *being* re-fer'd and made over to him. With what
delight-

delightful relishes, what sweet gusts of pleasure is this done! while the Soul tastes its own *act*; approves it with a full ungain-saying judgment; apprehends the condignity and fitness of it; assents to its self herein; and hath the ready suffrage, the harmonious concurrence of all its powers! When the words are no sooner spoken, *Worthy art thou, O Lord, to receive glory, honour and power, for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created*; but they are resounded from the *penetralia*, the inmost bowels, the most intimate receptacles, and secret chambers of the Soul, *O Lord, thou art worthy*: worthy, that I, and all things should *be to thee*: worthy, to be the *Omega*, as thou art the *Alpha*; the *last*, as thou art the *first*; the *end*, as thou art the *beginning* of all things; the *Ocean* into which all being shall flow, as the *Fountain* from which it sprang. My whole self, and all my powers, the excellencies now implanted in my being, the privileges of my now glorified state, are all worth nothing to me but *for thee*; please me only, as they make me fitter for thee. O the pleasure of these Sentiments, the joy of such raptures! when the Soul shall have no other notion of it self, than of an *everlasting sacrifice*, always ascending to God in its own flames.

For, this devotedness and subjection speak not, barely, an *act*, but a *state*: A *Being to the praise of grace*: A *Living to God*. And ^{Ro. 12. 1.} 'tis no mean pleasure that the sincere Soul finds.

finds, in the imperfect beginnings, the first Effays of this life, the initial breathings of such a Spirit, its entrance into this blessed state: when it makes the first tender and *present* of it self to God (as the Apostle expresses it); when it first begins to esteem it self an *hallowed thing*; separate, and set apart for God: its first act of unfeigned self-resignation; when it tells God from the very heart, *I now give up my self to thee to be thine*. Never was marriage-covenant made with such pleasure, with so complacential consent. This quitting claim to our selves, parting with our selves upon such terms, to be the Lords for ever; O the peace, the rest, the acquiescence of Spirit that attends it! When the poor Soul that was weary of it self, knew not what to do with it self, hath now on the sudden found this way of disposing it self to such an advantage; there is pleasure in this Treaty. Even the previous breakings and relentings of the Soul towards God are pleasant. But, O the pleasure of consent! of *Yeilding our selves to God* (as the Apostles expression is)! When the Soul is overcome, and cries out, *Lord, now I resign, I yield; Possess now thy own right, I give up my self to thee*. That *yeilding* is subjection, self-devoting; in order to future service and obedience, (*To whom ye yield your selves servants to obey, &c.*) And never did any man enrol himself, as a servant, to the greatest Prince on earth, with such joy. What pleasure is there in the often iterated

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Rom. 6.
13.

Yer. 16.

recognition of these transactions! in multiplying such bonds upon a mans own Soul (though done faintly, while the fear of breaking checks its joy in taking them on)! When in the uttering of these words, *I am thy servant, O Lord; thy servant, the son of thine hand-maid*, (i.e. thy born-servant, alluding to that custom and Law among the Jews), *Thy servant devoted to thy fear*; a man finds they fit his spirit, and are aptly expressive of the true sense of his Soul, is it not a grateful thing? And how pleasant is a state of life consequent and agreeable to such transactions and Covenants with God! When 'tis meat and drink to do his will! When his zeal eats a man up; and one shall find himself secretly consuming for God! and the vigour of his Soul exhaled in his service! Is it not a pleasant thing so to spend and be spent? When one can in a measure find that his will is one with Gods, transformed into the divine will; that there is but one common will and interest, and end between him and us; and so, that in *serving God we reign with him*; in spending our selves for him, we are perfected in him. Is not this a pleasant life? Some Heathens have spoken at such a rate of this kind of life, as might make us wonder and blush. One speaking of a virtuous person, saith; "He is as a good Soldier that bears wounds, and numbers skars; and at last, smitten through with darts, dying, will love the Emperor for whom he falls; he will (saith he) keep in mind that ancient

Psal. 116.
16.

Psal. 119.
38.

Seneca de
vita beata,
lib. 15.
Et ut bonus miles
feret vulnera, &c.

"ent

Epist. 96.

Epictet.
Enchir.

ent precept, *follow God*. But there are that complain, cry out and groan, and are compelled by force to do his commands, and hurried into them against their will, and what a madness is it (saith he) to be drawn rather than follow? And presently after subjoins, "We are born in a Kingdom; to obey God is liberty. The same person writes in a Letter to a friend: "If thou believe me when I most freely discover to thee the most secret fixed temper of my Soul, in all things my mind is thus formed: I obey not God so properly as I assent to him. I follow him with all my heart, not because I cannot avoid it. And another, "Lead me to whatsoever I am appointed, and I will follow thee chearfully; but if I refuse, or be unwilling, I shall follow notwithstanding.

A Soul cast into such a mould, formed into an obediential subject frame, what sweet peace doth it enjoy! how pleasant rest! Every thing rests most composedly in its proper place: A bone out of joint knows no ease, nor lets the body enjoy any. The creature is not in its place but when 'tis thus *subject*, is in this subordination to God. By flying out of this subordination, the world of mankind is become one great disjointed body, full of weary tossings, unacquainted with ease or rest. That Soul that is, but in a degree, reduc'd to that blessed state and temper, is as it were in a new world; so great and happy a change doth it now feel

feel in it self. But when this transformation shall be compleated in it; and the will of God shall be no sooner known than rested in with a complacential approbation; and every motion of the first and great mover shall be an *efficacious law* to guide and determine all our motions; and the lesser wheels shall presently run at the first impulse of the great and master-wheel, without the least rub or hesitation; when the law of sin shall no longer check the law of God; when all the *contentions* of a *rebellious* flesh; all the counter-strivings of a perverse, ungovernable heart shall cease for ever; O unconceivable blessedness of this consent, the pleasure of this joyful harmony, this peaceful accord!

Obedience, where 'tis due but from one creature to another, carries its no small advantages with it, and conducibleness to a pleasant unsollicitous life. To be particularly prescribed to in things, about which our minds would otherwise be tost with various apprehensions, anxious, uncertain thoughts; how great a priviledg is it! I cannot forget a pertinent passage of an excellent person of recent memory. "And (saith he) for pleasure, I shall profess my self so far from doing on that popular Idol, *Liberty*, that I hardly think it possible for any kind of obedience to be more painful than an unrestrained liberty. Were there not true bounds of Magistrates, of Laws, of Piety, of Reason in the heart, every man would have

Dr. Hammond's
Sermon of
Christ's
easy
yoke.

"have a Fool, I add, a mad Tyrant to his
 "Master, that would multiply him more sor-
 "rows, than briars and thorns did to *Adam*,
 "when he was freed from the *bliss* at once,
 "and the *restraint* of Paradise; and was sure
 "greater slave in the wilderness, than in the
 "inclosure. Would but the Scripture per-
 "mit me that kind of Idolatry, the binding
 "my faith and obedience to any one visible
 "infallible Judg or Prince, were it the *Pope*,
 "or the *Mufti*, or the *grand Tartar*; might
 "it be reconcileable with my *Creed*, it would
 "be certainly with my *interest*, to get pre-
 "sently into that posture of obedience. I
 "should learn so much of the *Barbarian Am-*
 "bassadors in *Appian*, which came on pur-
 "pose to the *Romans* to negotiate for leave
 "to be their servants. 'Twould be my *po-*
 "licy, if not my *piety*; and may now be my
 "wish, though not my *faith*, that I might
 "never have the trouble to *deliberate*, to
 "dispute, to doubt, to chuse, (those so ma-
 "ny profitless uneasinesses) but only the fa-
 "vour to receive commands, and the meek-
 "ness to obey them. How pleasurable then
 must obedience be to the perfect will of the
 blessed God, when our wills shall also be
 perfectly attuned and conformed there-
 unto! Therefore are we taught, *Thy will*
be done in earth as it is in heaven. What
 is most perfect in its kind, gives rule to the
 rest.

*Perfectissimum in suo
 genere est
 mensura re-
 liquorum.*

3. *Love.* This is an eminent part of the
 image or likeness of God in his Saints: As
 it

it is that great Attribute of the divine being that is, *alone*, put to give us a notion of God; *God is love*. This is an excellency (consider it whether in its original, or copy,) made up of pleasantnesses. All love hath complacency or pleasure in the *nature*, and most *formal notion* of it. To search for pleasure in love, is the same thing, as if a man should be solicitous to find water in the Sea, or light in the body of the Sun. *Love to a friend* is not without high pleasure, when especially he is actually present, and enjoy'd. *Love to a Saint* rises higher in nobleness and pleasure, according to the more excellent qualification of its object. 'Tis now in its highest improvement, in both these aspects of it; where whatsoever tends to gratifie our nature, whether as *humane*, or *holy*, will be in its full perfection. Now doth the Soul take up its stated dwelling in Love, even in God who is love; and as he is Love: 'tis now enclosed with Love, encompass'd with Love, 'tis conversant in the proper region, and element of Love. The Love of God is now perfected in it. That Love which is not only participated from him, but terminated in him, that *perfect Love* casts out tormenting Fear: So that here is pleasure without mixture. How naturally will the blessed Soul now dissolve and melt into pleasure! It is new fram'd on purpose for Love - embraces and enjoyments. It shall now love like God, as one composed of Love. It shall no longer be its complaint

1 Joh. 4.
8, 16.

1 Joh. 4.

M

plaint

plaint and burden, that it cannot retaliate in this kind; that being beloved it cannot love.

4. *Purity.* Herein also must the blessed Soul resemble God, and delight it self. Every one that hath this hope (viz. *of being hereafter like God, and seeing him as he is*) purifieth himself as he is pure. A God-like purity is intimately connect with the *expectation* of future blessedness, much more with the *fruition*. *Blessed are the pure in heart*; besides the reason there annext [for they shall see God] (which is to be considered under the other head, the pleasure unto which this likeness disposes) that proposition carries its own reason in it self. It is an incomparable pleasure that *purity* carries in its *own nature*: As sin hath in its very nature (besides its consequent guilt and sorrow) trouble and torment beyond expression. Whatsoever defiles, doth also disturb: Nor do any but pure pleasures deserve the name. An *Epicurus* himself will tell us, there cannot be *pleasure* without *wisdom, honesty, and righteousness*. 'Tis least of all possible there should, when once a person shall have a right knowledge of himself, and (which is the moral impurity whereof we speak) the filthiness of sin. I doubt not but much of the torment of Hell, will consist in those

whose
Doctrine,
as to this
matter of
pleasure,
is not so
much to
be bla-
med as
his pra-
ctice, if
both be rightly represented to us.

Οὐκ ἔστιν ἡδὺς ἢ τὸ ἀρετὴ καὶ σοφία καὶ δικαιοσύνη. Ex. Cicer.
I. de Fin.

too-late

too-late, and despairing self-loathings, those sickly resentments, the impure wretches will be possessed with, when they see what hideous deformed monsters their own wickedness hath made them. Here the gratifications of sense that attend it, bribe and seduce their judgments into another estimate of sin: but *then*, it shall be no longer thought of under the more favourable notion of a γλυκύπικρον: they shall taste nothing but the gall and worm-wood.

'Tis certainly no improbable thing, but that reason being now so fully rectified and undeceived, vizors torn off, and things now appearing in their own likenesses; so much will be seen, and apprehended of the intrinsique evil and malignity of their vitiated natures, as will serve for the matter of further torment; while yet such a sight can do no more to a change of their temper, than the Devils faith doth to theirs: Such sights being accompanied with their no-hope of ever attaining a better state, do therefore no way tend to mollifie or demulce their spirits, but to encrease their rage and torment.

It is however out of question, that the purity of heaven will infinitely inhanche the pleasure of it: For 'tis more certain, the intrinsical goodness of holiness (which term I need not among these instances; in as much as the thing admits not of one entire notion, but lies partly under this head, partly under the second, that of *devotedness to God*) will

Psal. 119.
140.

Job 9.

Prov. 15.
26.

be fully understood in Heaven, than the intrinsic evil of sin in Hell: And when it is understood, will it not affect? will it not please? Even here, how pleasing are things to the pure (but in degree so), that participate of the divine purity! *Thy word is very pure* (saith the Psalmist) *therefore thy servant loveth it.* Under this notion do holy ones take pleasure each in other; because they see somewhat of the divine likeness, their Fathers image, in one another: Will it not be much more pleasing to find it each one perfect in himself? to feel the ease, and peace, and rest, that naturally goes with it? A man that hath any love of cleanliness, if casually plung'd into the mire, he knows not what to do with himself, he phantasies his own cloaths to abhor him (as *Job* rhetorically speaks); so, doth as natural a pleasure attend purity: it hath it even in it self. *The words of the pure* (saith the Wise-man) *are pleasant words* (words of pleasantnesses it might be read): That pure breath that goes from him, is not without a certain pleasurable-ness accompanying it. And if so to another, much more to himself, especially when every thing corresponds; and (as the expression is) he finds himself *clean throughout.*

5. *Liberty*, (Another part of the Divine likeness; wherein we are to imitate God) cannot but be an unspeakable satisfaction. Supposing such a state of the notion of liberty as may render it really a perfection: which

which otherwise it would be a wickedness to impute to God, and an impossibility to partake from him.

I here speak of the *moral liberty* of a Saint, as such; not of the *natural liberty* of a man, as a man: and of the *liberty consummate* of Saints in glory; not of the *inchoate*, imperfect *liberty* of Saints on earth.

And therefore the intricate controversies about the liberty of the humane will, lye out of our way, and need not give us any trouble.

'Tis out of question that this Liberty consists not (what ever may be said of any other) in an equal propension to good or evil; nor in the wills independency on the practical understanding; nor in a various uncertain mutability, or inconstancy; nor is it such as is opposed to all necessity; 'tis not a liberty from the government of God, * nor from a determination to the simply best, and most eligible Objects.

* Which is a no more desirable state than

that which, I remember, the Historian tells us was the condition of the Armenians; who having cast off the government that was over them, became *Incerti, solutique, & magis sine Domino quam in libertate*. Tacit. An. l. 2.

But it is a liberty from the servitude of sin, from the seduction of a misguided Judgment; and the allurements of any insinuating forbidden Object: consisting in an abounded amplitude and enlargedness of Soul towards God, and indetermination to any inferior

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* *Libertas*
nostra non
est subiectio
ad Deum
formaliter,
sed ampli-
tudo con-
sequens
eam.
Gibieus.
De libert.
Dei & creaturae lib. i. c. 32.

riour good: resulting * from an entire sub-
 jection to the divine will, a submission to
 the order of God, and steady adherence to
 him. And unto which the many descripti-
 ons and elogies agree most indisputably,
 which from sundry Authors are congested to-
 gether by *Gibieus*, * in that ingenious Tra-
 ctate of Liberty.

As that, *He is free that lives as he will,*
 (from *Cicero* insisted on by *S. Aug. de Civit.*
Dei lib. 14. c. 25.) i. e. who neither wishes
 any thing, nor fears any thing; who in all
 things acquiesces in the will of God; who
 minds nothing but his own things, and ac-
 counts nothing his own but God; who fa-
 vors nothing but God; who is mov'd only
 by the will of God.

Again; *He is free, that cannot be hindred,*
being willing, nor forced being unwilling (from
Epietetus) i. e. who hath always his will;
 as having perfectly subjected it to the will
 of God, (as the same Author explains him-
 self).

Again; *He is free that is master of himself*
 (from the *Civilians*) i. e. (as that liberty
 respects the spirit of a man) that hath a mind
 independent on any thing foreign and alien
 to himself.

That only follows God (from *Philo Judaeus*)
; That lives according to his own reason
 (from *Aristotle*): With many more of like

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im-

import; that alone does fully and perfectly
sute that state of liberty the blessed Soul shall
hereafter eternally enjoy; as that Author
often acknowledges.

This is the glorious Liberty of the Children
of God; the Liberty wherewith the Son makes
free. Liberty indeed, measured and regu-
lated by the royal Law of Liberty, and which
is perfected only in a perfect conformity
thereto. There is a most servile * liberty,
a being (a) free from righteousness, which
under that specious name and shew, (b) en-
slaves a man to corruption: and there is as
free a service, by which a man is still the
more free, by how much the more he serves,
and is subject to his superiours will, and
governing influences; and by how much
the less possible it is, he should swerve there-
from*.

* Quam
invenire
sibi, adju-
vant ser-
vitutem.
Et sunt,
quodam
modo, pro-
pria Liber-
tate capti-
vi. Boeth.
ex Gib.

valeat trahi catenam. Sen. Trag. (a) Rom. 6. 20. (b) 2 Pet. 2.

* Liberior quò divine gratiæ subjectior. Primum Liberum arbi-
trium, quod homini datum est, quando primum creatus est rectus,
potuit non peccare; sed potuit & peccare. Hoc autem novissimum
eò potentius erit, quo peccare non potuit. Aug. de Civitat. Dei
lib. 22. c. 30.

The nearest approaches therefore of the
Soul to God; It's most intimate union with
him, and entire subjection to him in its
glorified state, makes its liberty consummate.
Now is its deliverance compleat, its bands
are fallen off; 'tis perfectly disentangled from
all the snares of death, in which it was
formerly held; 'tis under no restraints, op-

preſt by no weights, held down by no clogs. It hath the free exerciſe of all its powers; hath every faculty and affection at command. How unconceivable a pleaſure is this! With what delight doth the poor priſoner entertain himſelf, when his manacles and fetters are knockt off! when he's enlarged from his loathſom dungeon, and the houſe of his bondage; breathes in a free air; can diſpoſe of himſelf, and walk at liberty whither he will! The bird eſcaped from his Cage, or freed from his Line and Stone, that reſiſted its vain and too feeble ſtruglings before; how pleaſantly doth it range! with what joy doth it clap its wings, and take its flight! A faint Emblem of the joy, wherewith that pleaſant chearful note ſhall one day be ſung and chanted forth, *Our ſoul is eſcaped, as a bird out of the ſnare of the Fowler; the ſnare is broken, and we are eſcaped.* There is now no place for ſuch a complaint, *I would, but I cannot*; I would turn my thoughts to glorious objects, but I cannot. The bleſſed Soul feels it ſelf *free* from all confinement: nothing reſiſts its will, as its will doth never reſiſt the will of God. It knows no limits, no reſtraints; is not tied up to this or that particular good; but expatiates freely in the immense univerſal all-comprehending goodneſs of God himſelf.

And this liberty is the perfect Image and likeneſs of the liberty of God, eſpecially in its conſummate ſtate. In its progreſs

gress towards it, it increaseth as the Soul draws nearer to God: which nearer approach is not in respect of place, or local nearness, but likeness, and conformity to him; in respect whereof, as God is most sublime and excellent in himself, so is it in him.

*Libertas nostra in-
heret di-
vine, ut
exemplari,
& in per-
petua ejus
imitatione
versatur,
sive or-*

tum, sive progressum, sive consummationem ejus intuearis: Libertas nostra, in ortu, est capacitas Dei. In progressu, libertas res est longè clarior: progressus enim attenditur penes accessum hominis ad Deum; qui quidem non locali propinquitate, sed imitatione & assimilatione constat, & eà utique imitatione, & assimilatione, secundum quam, sicut Deus est sublimis, & excelsus seipso; ita homo est sublimis, & excelsus Deo, & altitudo ejus Deus est, ut inquit D. Augustinus. Consummatio denique libertatis est, cum homo in Deum, felicissimo gloriæ cœlestis statu, transformatur; & Deus omnia illi esse incipit. Qui quidem postremus status, eo differt à priore——quippe homo tum non modo inalligatus est creaturis, sed nec circa illas negotiatur, etiam referendo in finem——nec in creaturis se infundit, nec per illas procedit, ut faciebat cum esset viator: sed in solo Deo, & conquiescit & effundit se placidissime, & motus ejus, cum sit ad presentissimum & conjunctissimum bonum, similior est quieti quàm motui, Gib. l. 2. c. 14.

Its consummate liberty is, when it is fully transformed into that likeness of God, as that he is *all* to it, as to himself. So that as he is an infinite *satisfaction* to himself; his likeness in this respect, is the very *satisfaction* it self of the blessed Soul.

6. *Tranquillity.* This also is an eminent part of that assimilation to God, wherein the blessedness of the holy Soul must be understood to lye: a perfect composure, a perpetual and everlasting calm, an eternal

vacan-

*Omnes
turbulæ
tempesta-
tes quæ
procul à
Deorum
cælestium
tranquil-
litate exul-
tant, &c.
Apuleius
de Deo
Socratis.*

— Ἐν
ποτέρεα
τῶν φύσε-
ων τέλει
τὸν θεὸν
τακίσον;
ἀρα οὐκ
ἐν σασι-
μωτέρεα καὶ
ἐδραιώτερα,
diffir. 1.

vacancy from all unquietness or perturbation. Nothing can be supposed more inseparably agreeing to the nature of God than this: Whom Scripture witnesses to be *without variableness or shadow of change*. There can be no commotion without mutation, nor can the least mutation have place in a perfectly simple and uncompounded nature: Whence even *Pagan* reason hath been wont to attribute the most undisturbed and unalterable tranquillity to the nature of God. *Balaam* knew it was incompatible to him to *lye or repent*. And (supposing *him* to speak this from a present inspiration) it is their common Doctrine concerning God. *Any the least troubles and tempests* (saith one) *are far exiled from the tranquillity of God; for all the inhabitants of heaven do ever enjoy the same stable tenour, even an eternal equality of mind*. And a little after speaking of God, saith he, *'Tis neither possible he should be moved by the force of another, for nothing is stronger than God: nor of his own accord, for nothing is perfecter than God*.

And whereas there is somewhat that is mutable, and subject to change; somewhat that is stable and fixt: *In which of those natures* (saith another) *shall we place God? must we not in that which is more stable and fixt, and free from this fluidness and mutability? For what is there among all beings, that can be stable or consist, if God do not by his own touch stay and sustain the nature of it?*

καὶ ἀππληαγμύνη τῷ πνεύματι τέτε, &c. Max. Tyr.

Hence

Hence is it made a piece of *deiformity*, of likeness to God, by another who tells his friend, *It is an high and great thing which thou desirest, and even bordering upon a Deity; not to be moved.*

Quod desideras autem magnum, summum est,

Deoque vicinum; non concuti. Sen. de tranquil. Animi.

Yea, so hath this Doctrine been insisted on by them, that (while other Divine perfections have been less understood), it hath occasioned *the Stoical assertion of fatality* to be introduced on the one hand, and *the Epicurean negation of providence* on the other; lest any thing should be admitted that might seem repugnant to the tranquillity of their *Numina*.

But we know that our God doth whatsoever pleaseth him, both in heaven and earth; and that he doth all according to the wise counsel of his holy will; *freely*, not *fatally*, upon the eternal prevision, and foresight of all circumstances and events: so that nothing can occur that is new to him, nothing that he knows not how to improve to good; or that can therefore infer any alteration of his counsels, or occasion to him the least perturbation or disquiet in reference to them.

Holy Souls *begin* herein to imitate him, as soon as they first give themselves up to his wise and gracious conduct. 'Tis enough that he is wise for himself and them. Their hearts safely trust in him. They com-
mit

mit themselves with unsollicitous confidence, to his guidance; knowing he *cannot* himself be mis-led, and that he will not mis-lead them. As *Abraham* followed him, not knowing whither he went. And thus, by *faith*, they enter into his rest.

They do now in their present state, only enter into it, or however about the borders: Their future assimilation to God in this, gives them a stated settlement of spirit in this rest. They *before* did owe their tranquillity to their *faith*; now to their actual *fruition*. Their *former* acquiescency, and sedate temper was hence, that they believed God *would* deal well with them at last; their *present*, for that he *hath* done so. Those words have now their fullest sense (both as to the *rest* it self which they mention; and the *season* of it) *Return to thy rest, O my soul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee.* The *occasions of trouble*, and a *passive temper of spirit* are ceased together. There is now no fear without, nor terror within. The rage of the world is now allay'd, it storms no longer. Reproach and persecution have found a period. There is no more dragging before Tribunals, nor haling into Prisons; no more running into dens and deserts; or wandering to and fro in Sheep-skins, and Goat-skins. And with the cessation of the external occasions of trouble, the inward dispositions thereto are also ceased. All infirmities of spirit, tumultuating passions, unmortified corruptions, doubts, or imperfect knowledg of the
love

love of God, are altogether vanished, and done away for ever.

And indeed, that perfect cure wrought within, is the souls great security from all future disquiet. A well tempered spirit hath been wont strangely to preserve its own peace in this unquiet world. *Philosophy* hath boasted much in this kind; and *Christianity* performed more.

The Philosophical (*γῆλυν*, or) calmness of mind, is not without its excellency and praise: "That stable settlement and fix-
"edness of spirit, that *ἐνδυσία* (as the Mo-
"ralist tells us, it was wont to be termed
"among the *Grecians*, and which he calls
"Tranquillity); when the mind is always
"equal, and goes a smooth even course, is
"propitious to it self, and beholds the things
"that concern it with pleasure, and inter-
"rupts not this joy, but remains in a pla-
"cid state, never at any time exalting or de-
"pressing it self. But how far doth the *Chri-*
stian peace surpass it! *That peace which passeth*
all understanding; that amidst surrounding
dangers, enables the holy Soul to say (with-
out a proud boast) *None of all these things*
move me. The peace that immediately re-
sults from that faith which unites the Soul
with God, and fixes it upon him as its firm
basis. When 'tis kept in perfect peace, by being
stay'd upon him, because it trusts in him. When
the heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord; filled
full of joy, and peace, or of joyous peace, (by
an *ἐν δυνάμει*) in believing

Sen. de
tranquil.
anim.

Phil. 4. 7.

A&. 20.
24.

Isa. 26. 3.

Psal. 112.

7.

Rom. 15.

13.

And

And if Philosophy and (which far transcends it) Christianity, Reason and Faith, have that statique power, can so compose the soul, and reduce it to so quiet a consistency in the midst of storms and tempests: how perfect and contentful a repose, will the immediate vision, and enjoyment of God afford it, in that serene and peaceful Region, where it shall dwell for ever, free from any molestation from without, or principle of distress within !

C H A P.

C H A P. IX.

The Pleasure arising from knowing, or considering our selves to be like God: from considering it, 1. Absolutely, 2. Comparatively, or respectively; To the former state of the Soul, To the state of lost Souls, To its pattern, To the way of accomplishment, To the Souls own expectations, To what it secures. The Pleasure whereto it disposes, of union, communion. A comparison of this Righteousness, with this Blessedness.

2. **H**ERE is also to be considered, *the pleasure and satisfaction involv'd in this assimilation to God, as it is known or reflected on, or that arises from the cognosci of this likeness.*

We have hitherto discoursed of the pleasure of *being like God*, as that is apprehended by a *spiritual sensation*, a feeling of that inward rectitude, that happy pleasure of Souls now perfectly restored: We have yet to consider a further pleasure, which accrews from the Souls animadversion upon it self, its contemplating it self thus happily transformed.

formed. And though that very sensation be not without some animadversion (as indeed no sensible perception can be performed without it), yet we must conceive a consequent animadversion, which is much more explicate and distinct; and which therefore yields a very great addition of satisfaction and delight. As when the blessed Soul shall turn its eye upon it self, and designedly compose and set it self to consider its present state and frame; the consideration it shall now have of it self, and this likeness impressed upon it, may be either

} Absolute, or
} Comparative and respective.

1. Absolute. How pleasing a spectacle will this be, when the glorified soul shall now intently behold its own glorious frame? when it shall dwell in the contemplation of it self? View it self round on every part, turn its eye from glory to glory, from beauty to beauty, from one excellency to another; and trace over the whole draught of this image, this so exquisite piece of divine workmanship, drawn out in its full perfection upon its self? When the glorified eye, and divinely enlightened and inspirited mind, shall apply it self to criticize, and make a judgment upon every several lineament, every touch and stroke; shall stay it self, and scrupulously insist upon every part? View at leisure every character of glory the blessed
God

God hath instamp'd upon it; How will this likeness now satisfy! And that expression of the blessed Apostle (taken notice of upon some other occasion formerly) [The glory to be *revealed* in us], seems to import in it a reference to such a self-intuition: What serves *revelation* for, but in order to *vision*? What is it, but an *exposing things to view*? And what is revealed *in us*, is chiefly exposed to *our own view*.

All the time, from the Soul's first conversion till now, God hath been as it were at work upon it, (*--He that wrought us to, &c.*) 2 Cor. 5. 5. hath been labouring it, shaping it, polishing it, spreading his own glory upon it, inlaying, inameling it with glory: now at last, the whole work is revealed, the Curtain is drawn aside, the blessed Soul awakes. Come now, faith God, *behold my work*, see what I have done upon thee, let my work now see the light; I dare expose it to the *censure* of the most curious eye, let thine own have the *pleasure* of beholding it. It was a work carried on in a Mystery, secretly wrought (as in the lower parts of the earth, as we alluded before) by a Spirit that came and went no man could tell how. Besides, that in the general only, we knew *we should be like him*, it did not yet appear what we should be; *now it appears*: there is a revelation of this glory. O the ravishing pleasure of its first appearance! and it will be a glory always fresh and flourishing (as *Job's* expression is, *My glory was fresh in me*) and will

will afford a fresh undecaying pleasure for ever.

2. The blessed Soul may also be supposed to have a comparative and respective consideration of the impressed glory. That is, so as to compare it with, and refer it to several things that may come into consideration with it: and may so heighten its own delight in the contemplation thereof.

1. *If we consider this impression of glory, in reference to its former loathsome deformities that were upon it, and which are now vanished and gone: how unconceivable a pleasure will arise from this comparison! When the Soul shall consider at once what it is, and what once it was, and thus bethink it self: I that did sometimes bear the accursed image of the Prince of darkness, do now represent and partake of the holy, pure nature of the Father of lights. I was a meer Chaos, an hideous heap of Deformity, Confusion and*
 2 Cor. 4. 6. *Darkness, But he that made light to shine out of darkness, shined into me, to give the knowledge of the light of his own glory in the face of Jesus*
 Prov. 4. 18. *Christ; and since, made my way as the shining light, shining brighter and brighter unto this perfect day. I was an habitation for Dragons, a Cage of noisome lusts; that as Serpents and Vipers, were winding to and fro through all my faculties and powers, and preying upon my very vitals. Then was I hateful to God, and an hater of him; sin and vanity had all my heart. The charming*
 invi-

Invitations, and allurements of grace, were as musick to a dead man; to think a serious thought of God, or breathe forth an affectionate desire after him, was as much against my heart, as to pluck out mine own eyes, or offer violence to mine own life.

After, I began to live the Spiritual new life; how slow and faint was my progress and tendency towards perfection? how indispensed did I find my self to the proper actions of that life? To go about any holy spiritual work, was too often, as to climb an Hill, or strive against the stream; or as an attempt to fly without wings. I have sometime said to my heart, *Come, now let's go pray, love God, think of heaven*; but O how listless to these things! how lifeless in them! Impressions made; how quickly lost! gracious frames, how soon wrought off and gone! characters of glory raz'd out, and overspread with earth and dirt! Divine comeliness hath now at length made me perfect. *The glory of God* doth now incloath me; they are his ornaments I now wear. He hath made me that lately *lay among the pots, as the wings of a dove covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold*; He hath put another nature into me, the true likeness of his own holy divine nature; He hath now perfectly master'd and wrought out the enmity of my heart against him. Now to be with God is my very element. Loving, admiring, praising him, are as natural as breathing once was. I am all spirit and life, I feel my self disburthened,

and unclogg'd of all the heavy oppressive weights that hung upon me. No *body of death* doth now incumber me, no deadness of heart, no coldness of love, no drowsie sloth, no averfeness from God, no earthly mind, no sensual inclinations or affections, no sinful divisions of heart between God and Creatures. He hath now the whole of me. I enjoy and delight in none but him: O blessed change! O happy day!

2. *If in contemplating it self, cloathed with this likeness, it respect the state of damned Souls, what transports must that occasion! what ravishing resentments!* When it compares humane nature in its highest perfection, with the same nature in its utmost depravation? An unspeakably more unequal comparison than that would be, of the most amiable lovely person, flourishing in the prime of youthful strength and beauty, with a putrified rotten carcass, deformed by the corruption of a loathsome grave. When glorified Spirits shall make such a reflection as this: Lo, here we shine in the glorious brightness of the divine Image; and behold yonder deformed accursed Souls: They were as capable of this glory as we; had the same nature with us, the same reason, the same intellectual faculties and powers; but what monsters are they now become? They eternally hate the eternal excellency. Sin and death are finished upon them. They have each of them an hell of horror and wickedness in it self. Whence is this amazing difference! Though
this

this cannot but be an awful wonder, it cannot also but be temper'd with pleasure and joy.

3. We may suppose this likeness to be considered in reference to its pattern, and in comparison therewith; which will then be another way of heightning the pleasure that shall arise thence. Such a frame and constitution of spirit is full of delights in it self: but when it shall be refer'd to its *original*, and the correspondency between the one and the other be observ'd and view'd; how exactly they accord, and answer each other, as face doth face in the water; this cannot still but add pleasure to pleasure, one delight to another. When the blessed Soul shall interchangeably turn its eye to God, and it self; and consider the agreement of *glory to glory*; the several *derived* excellencies to the *original*. He is wise, and so am I; holy, and so am I. I am now made perfect as my heavenly Father is: this gives a new relish to the former pleasure. How will this likeness please under that notion, *as it is his*; a likeness to *him*! O the accent that will be put upon those appropriative words to be made partakers of [His] holiness, and of the [Divine] nature! Personal excellencies in themselves considered, cannot be reflected on, but with some pleasure; but to the ingenuity of a child, how especially grateful will it be, to observe in it self such and such graceful deportments, wherein it naturally imitates its father! So he was wont to speak, and act, and

deemean himself. How natural is it *unto love* to affect and aim at the imitation of the person loved ! So natural it must be to take complacency therein ; when we have hit our mark, and achiev'd our design. The pursuits and attainments of love are proportionable and correspondent each to other.

And what heart can compass the greatness of this thought, *to be made like God !* Lord, was there no lower pattern than thy self, thy glorious blessed self, according to which to form a worm ! This cannot want its due resentments in a glorified state.

4. *This transformation of the blessed Soul into the likeness of God, may be viewed by it, in reference to the way of accomplishment ; as an end, brought about by so amazing stupendous means : which will certainly be a pleasing contemplation.* When it reflects on the method and course insisted on, for bringing this matter to pass ; views over the work of redemption, in its tendency to this end, *The restoring Gods Image in Souls ;* considers Christ manifested *to us*, in order to his being revealed and formed *in us* : That God was made in the likeness of man, to make men after the likeness of God ; that he partook with us of the *humane nature*, that we might with him partake of the *divine* ; that he assumed our flesh, in order to impart to us his Spirit. When it shall be considered, for this end had we so *many great and precious promises ;* for this end did the glory of the Lord shine upon *us through the glass of the Gospel ; that we might be*

Phil. 2. 7.

2 Pet. 1. 4
2 Cor. 3.
18.

be made partakers, &c. that we might be changed, &c. Yea, when it shall be called to mind, (though it be far from following hence, that this is the only or principal way, wherein the life and death of Christ have influence, in order to our eternal happiness) that our Lord Jesus lived for this end, that we might learn *so to walk, as he also walked*; that he died that we *might be conformed to his death*; that he rose again that we might with him *attain the resurrection of the dead*; that he was in us the *hope of glory*, that he might be *in us* (that is, the same Image that bears his Name) our final consummate glory it self also. With what pleasure will these harmonious congruities, these apt correspondencies, be look'd into at last !

Now may the glorified Saint say, I here see the end the Lord Jesus came into the world for. I see for what he was *lift up*, made a spectacle; that he might be *a transforming one*. What the effusions of his Spirit were for; why it so earnestly strove with my way-ward heart. I now behold in my own Soul, the fruit of the travel of his Soul. This was the project of redeeming love, the design of all powerful Gospel-grace. Glorious atchievement! blessed end of that great and notable undertaking! happy issue of that high design !

5. *With a reference to all their own expectations and endeavours.* When it shall be considered by a Saint in glory; The attainment of this perfect likeness to God, was the utmost mark of all my designs and aims; the term

of all my hopes and desires. This is that I long'd and laboured for ; that which I pray'd and waited for ; which I so earnestly breath'd after, and restlessly pursu'd. It was but *to recover the defaced image of God : To be again made like him, as once I was.* Now I have attained my end ; I have the fruit of all my labour and travels ; I see now the truth of those (often) encouraging words, *Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled. Be not weary of well-doing, for ye shall reap, if ye faint not.* What would I once have given for a steady abiding frame of holiness, for an heart constantly bent and biaſſed toward God ; constantly serious, constantly tender, lively, watchful, heavenly, spiritual, meek, humble, chearful, self-denying ? How have I cryed and striven for this, to get such a heart ! such a temper of spirit ! How have I pleaded with God and my own Soul, in order hereto ! How often over have I spread this desire before the Searcher and Judg of hearts ; *Turn me out of all my worldly comforts, so thou give me but such a heart ; Let me spend my days in a Prison, or a Desert, so I have but such a heart ; I refuse no reproaches, no losses, no tortures, may I but have such a heart ?* How hath my Soul been sometimes ravish'd with the very thoughts of such a temper of spirit, as hath appeared amiable in my eye, but I could not attain ? and what a torture again hath it been that I could not ? What grievance in all the world, in all the days of my vanity, did I ever find comparable

parable to this; To be able to frame to my self by Scripture, and rational light and rules, the Notion and Idea of an excellent temper of spirit; and then to behold it, to have it in view, and not be able to reach it, to possess my Soul of it? What indignation have I sometimes conceived against mine own Soul, when I have found it wandering, and could not reduce it; hovering, and could not fix it; dead, and could not quicken it; low, and could not raise it? How earnestly have I expected this blessed day, when all those distempers should be perfectly healed, and my Soul recover an healthy, lively, spiritual frame? What fresh ebullitions of joy will here be, when all former desires, hopes, endeavours are crowned with success and fruit! This joy is the joy of Harvest. *They that have sown in tears, do now reap in joy. They that went out weeping, bearing precious seed; now with rejoicing, bring their sheaves with them.*

Psal. 126;

6.

6. In reference to what this imprest likeness shall for ever secure to it: an everlasting amity and friendship with God; that it shall never sin, nor be ever frown more.

1. That it shall sin no more. The perfected image of God in it, is its security for this: for 'tis holy throughout; in every point conformed to his nature and will; there remains in it nothing contrary to him. It may therefore certainly conclude, it shall never be liable to the danger of doing any thing, but what is good in his sight: and what solace will the blessed Soul find in this! If now an Angel
from

from Heaven should assure it, that from such an hour it should sin no more, the world would not be big enough to hold such a Soul. It hath now escaped the deadliest of dangers, the worst of deaths, (and which even in its present state, upon more deliberate calmer thoughts it accounts so) the sting of death, the very deadliness of death; the Hell of Hell it self. The deliverance is now complete which cannot but end in delight and praise.

2. That God can never frown more. This 'tis hence also assured of: How can he but take perfect everlasting complacency in his own perfect likeness and image; and behold with pleasure his glorious workmanship, now never liable to impairment or decay? How pleasant a thought is this, The blessed God never beholds me but with delight! I shall always behold his serene countenance, his amiable face never covered with any clouds, never darkened with any frown! "I shall now have cause to complain no more; "My God is a stranger to me, he conceals "himself, I cannot see his face; lo, he is in- "compass with Clouds and darkness, or "with flames and terrors. These occasions are for ever ceased. God sees no cause, either to *behold* the blessed Soul with displeasure, or with displeasure to *avert* from it, and turn off his eye. And will not this eternally satisfy! When God himself is so well pleased, shall not we!

2. The pleasure it disposes to. Besides that *the inbeing and knowledg of this likeness* are so satisfying; It disposes, and is the souls qualification for a yet further pleasure: That of *closest union, and most inward communion with the blessed God.*

1. *Union*: Which (what it is more than relation) is not till now compleat. Besides *relation* it must needs import *presence*: not *Physical*, or *Local*; for so nothing can be nearer God than it is: but *moral* and *cordial*, by which the holy Soul with *will* and *affections*, guided by rectified reason and judgment, closes with, and embraces him; and he also upon wise forelaid counsel, and with infinite delight and love embraceth it: So friends are said to be one (besides their relation as friends) by an union of hearts. An union between God and the creature, as to kind and nature higher than this, and lower than Hypostatical or personal union, I understand not, and therefore say nothing of it*.

* I would
fain know
what the
union, some

Tertium shall be, resulting from the Physical union, some speak of.

But as to the union here mentioned: as, till the Image of God be perfected, it is not compleated; so it cannot but be perfect then. When the Soul is perfectly formed according to Gods own heart, and fully participates the divine likeness, is perfectly like him; that likeness cannot but infer the most intimate

Joh. 17.
21.

Ver. 11.

Ver. 21.

intimate union that two such natures can admit: that is, (for nature) a *love-union*; such as that which our Saviour mentions, and prays to the Father to perfect, between themselves and all believers, and among believers, mutually with one another. Many much trouble themselves about this Scripture; but sure that can be no other than a *love-union*. For, (1) 'Tis such an union as Christians are capable of among themselves; (for surely he would never pray that they might be one with an union whereof they are not capable). (2) 'Tis such an union as may be made visible to the world. Whence 'tis an obvious corollary, *that the union between the Father and the Son, there spoken of as the pattern of this, is not their union or oneness in essence* (though it be a most acknowledged thing, that there is such an essential union between them); for, who can conceive that Saints should be one among themselves, and with the Father and the Son, with such an union as the Father and the Son are one themselves, if the essential union between Father and Son were the union here spoken of? But the *exemplary* or *patern-union*, here mentioned between the Father and Son, is but an union in mind, in love, in design, and interest; wherein he prays, that Saints on earth might *visibly* be one with them also, *that the world might believe, &c.*

'Tis yet a rich pleasure that springs up to glorified Saints from that *love-union* (now perfected) between the blessed God and them.

them. 'Tis mentioned and shadowed in Scripture, under the name and notion of marriage-union; in which the greatest mutual complacency is always supposed a necessary ingredient. To be thus joined to the Lord, and made as it were one Spirit with him; For the eternal God to cleave in love to a *nothing-creature*, as his likeness upon it engages him to do; is this no pleasure, or a mean one?

1 Cor. 6: 16.

2. *Communion*: unto which that union is fundamental, and introductive; and which follows it upon the same ground, from a natural propensity of *like to like*. There is nothing now to hinder God and the holy Soul of the most inward fruitions and enjoyments; no animosity, no strangeness, no unsuitableness on either part. Here the glorified Spirits of the just have liberty to solace themselves amidst the rivers of pleasure at Gods own right hand, without check or restraint. They are pure, and these pure. They touch nothing that can defile, they defile nothing they can touch. They are not now forbidden the nearest approaches to the (*once*) inaccessible Majesty; there's no Holy of Holies into which they may not enter, no dore lock'd up against them. They may have free admission into the innermost secret of the divine presence, and pour forth themselves in the most liberal effusions of love and joy: as they must be the eternal subject of those infinitely richer communications

The Blessedness of the Righteous.

ons from God, even of *immense and boundless love and goodness.*

Do not debase this pleasure by low thoughts, nor frame too daring *positive* apprehensions of it. 'Tis yet a secret to us. The eternal converses of the King of glory with glorified Spirits, are only known to himself and them. That expression (which we so often meet in our way) *It doth not yet appear what we shall be,* seems left on purpose to check a too curious and prying inquisitiveness into these unrevealed things. The great God will have his reserves of glory, of love, of pleasure for that future state. Let him alone a while, with those who are already received into those mansions of glory, those everlasting habitations: He will find a time for those that are yet Pilgrims and wandering Exiles, to ascend and enter too.

In the mean time, what we know of this communion may be gathered up into this general account, *The reciprocation of loves;* the flowing and reflowing of everlasting love, between the blessed Soul and its infinitely blessed God; its egress towards him, his illapses into it.

Unto such pleasure doth this likeness dispose and qualify: You can no way consider it, but it appears a most pleasurable satisfying thing.

Thus far have we shewn the *qualification* for this blessedness, and the *nature* of it; *What it prerequisites,* and *wherein it lies:* And how highly congruous it is, that the former of these

these should be made a pre-requisite to the latter, will sufficiently appear to any one that shall, in his own thoughts, compare *this righteousness* and *this blessedness* together. He will indeed plainly see, that the natural state of the case and habitude of these, each to other, make this connexion unalterable and eternal; so as that it must needs be simply impossible, to be *thus blessed* without being *thus righteous*.

For what is this righteousness other than *this blessedness begun*, the seed and principle of it? And that with as exact proportion (or rather sameness of Nature) as is between the grain sown and reaped; which is more than intimated in that of the Apostle, *Be not deceived, God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap: For he that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption: (there is the same proportion too) but he that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting: Which though it be spoken to a particular case, is yet spoken from a general rule and reason applicable a great deal further.*

Gal. 6. 7,
8.

And as some conceive (and is undertaken to be demonstrated) that the seeds of things are not *virtually* only, but *actually* and *formally* the very things themselves: so is it here also. The very parts of this *blessedness* are discernable in this *righteousness*, the *future vision of God* in *present knowledge* of him: for this knowledge is a real initial part of *righteousness*; the rectitude of the mind and appre-

Dr. Harv.
de Oro.

apprehensions concerning God, consisting in conformity to his revelation of himself.

Present holiness, including also the future *assimilation to God*: and the *contentment and peace* that attends it, the *consequent satisfaction in glory*.

* Πῶς οὖν
γινώμεθα
καθ' ὁμοί-
ωσιν; διὰ
τῶν
εὐαγγελί-
ων. Τί ὅτι
Χριστιαν-
ισμός; θε-
ομοιώσις:
κατὰ τὸ
ἐνδεχό-
μενον ἀν-
θρώπου
φύσει.
Greg. Nyss.
in verba
Faciamus
homi-
nem, &c.
Orat. 1.

But as in glory, the *impression of the divine likeness*, is that which *vision subserves*, and whence *satisfaction results*; so is it here (visibly) the main thing also. The end and design of the Gospel-revelation, * of whole Christianity (I mean Systematically considered), of all Evangelical Doctrines and knowledg, is to restore Gods likeness and image; from whence joy and peace result of course; when once the Gospel is *believed*. The Gospel is the instrument of impressing Gods likeness, in order whereunto it must be *understood, and received into the mind*. Being so, the *impression upon the heart and life* are Christianity, *habitual and practical*, whereupon joy and pleasure (the belief or thorough reception of the Gospel thus intervening) do necessarily ensue, Rom. 15. 13.

So aptly is the only way or method of *seeing Gods face, so as to be satisfied with his likeness*, said to be, in or thorough *righteousness*.

C H A P. X.

The season of this Satisfaction, which is twofold; at

*{ Death.
{ Resurrection.*

The former spoken to; wherein is shewn, that this life is to the Soul (even of a Saint) but as a sleep: that at Death it awakes. As to the latter; that there is a considerable accession to its happiness at the Resurrection.

3. **T**HE season of this Blessedness, comes next to be considered; which (as the words [*when I awake*] have been concluded here to import) must, in the general, be stated, beyond the time of this present life.

Holy Souls are here *truly* blessed, not *perfectly*; or their present blessedness is perfect only in *nature* and *kind*, not in *degree*. 'Tis, in this respect, as far short of perfection as their holiness is. Their hunger and thirst are *present*, their being fill'd is yet *future*. The experience of Saints in their best state on earth, their desires, their hopes, their sighs and groans do sufficiently witness they are not *satisfied*; or if they be in point of *security*,

rity, they are not in point of *enjoyment*. The completion of this blessedness is reserved to a better state; as its being the *end of their way*, their *rest from their labours*, the *reward of their work*, doth import and require. Therefore many Scriptures that speak of their present *rest, peace, repose, satisfaction*, must be understood in a comparative, not the absolute highest sense.

Matt. 5.6.

More particularly, *In that other state*, the season of their blessedness is twofold; or there are two terms from whence (in respect of some gradual or modal diversifications) it may be said severally to commence, or bear date, *viz.*

The time } Of their *entrance upon a blessed immortality*, when they shall have laid down their earthly Bodies *in death*.
 } Of their *consummation therein* when they receive their bodies glorified, *in the general resurrection*.

Both these may not unfitly be signified by the Phrase in the Text [*when I awake*]: For, though Scripture doth more directly apply the term of [*awaking*] to the latter, there will be no violence done to the Metaphor, if we extend its signification to the former also. To which purpose it is to be noted, that it is not *Death* formally, or the *disanimating of the body*, we would have here to be understood by it (which indeed sleeping would more aptly signify than awaking), but (what is co-incident therewith in the same period) the *exuscitation*, and revival of the

the Soul. When the Body falls asleep, then doth the Spirit awake; and the eye-lids of the morning, even of an eternal day, do now first open upon it.

I. Therefore we shall not exclude from this season the introductive state of blessedness, which takes its beginning from the blessed Souls first entrance into the invisible state. And the fitness of admitting it will appear by clearing these two things,

1. That its condition in this life, even at the best, is in some sort but a sleep.

2. That when it passes out of it into the invisible Regions, 'tis truly said to awake.

1. *Its abode in this mortal body, is but a continual sleep*; its senses are bound up, a drowsie slumber possesses and suspends all its faculties and powers.

Before the renovating change, how frequently doth the Scripture speak of sinners as men asleep? *Let not us sleep as do others.* Awake thou that sleepest, and stand up from the dead, &c. They are in a dead sleep, under the sleep of death: They apprehend things as men asleep. How slight, obscure, hovering notions have they of the most momentous things? and which it most concerns them to have thorough real apprehensions of? All their thoughts of God, Christ, Heaven, Hell, of Sin, of Holiness, are but uncertain wild guesses, blind hallucinations, incoherent phantasies; the absurdity and inconcinnity whereof, they no more reflect upon than men asleep. They know not these things,

1 Thes. 5. 6.
Eph. 5. 14.

but only *dream of them*. They put darkness for light, and light for darkness; have no senses exercised to discern between good and evil. The most substantial realities are with them meer shadows, and *Chimera's*; *Phan-sied and imagined dangers* startle them (as 'tis wont to be with men in a dream), *Real ones*, though never so near them, they as little fear as *they*. The creature of their own imagination, the Lion in the way, which they dream of in their slothful slumber, affrights them; but the real roaring Lion that is ready to devour them, they are not afraid of.

And conversion doth but relax, and intermit; it doth not totally break off this sleep: It, at it were, attenuates the consopiting fumes, doth not utterly dispel them. What a difficulty is it to watch but one hour? There are some lucid and vivid intervals, but of how short continuance? how soon doth the awakened Soul close its heavy eyes and falls asleep again? how often do temptations surprize *even such*, in their slumbring fits, while no sense of their danger can prevail with them *to watch and pray* (with due care and constancy) lest they enter there-into?

* *Hither* are most of the sins of our lives to be imputed and refer'd; not to *meer ignorance*, that we know not sin from duty, or what will please God, and what displease him; but to a drowsie inadvertency, that

* So well doth the Apostles watch-word sute our case, Awake to Righteousness, and sin not, &c. 1 Cor. 15. 34.

we keep not our spirits in a watchful considering posture. Our eyes, that should be ever *towards the Lord*, will not be kept open, and though we resolve, we forget our selves; before we are aware, we find our selves overtaken; sleep comes on upon us like an armed man, and we cannot avert it. How often do we hear, and read, and pray, and meditate as persons asleep? as if we knew not what we were about? How remarkable useful providences escape either our *notice* or *due improvement*, amidst our secure slumbers? How many Visits from heaven are lost to us, when we are (as it were) between sleeping and waking (*I sleep, but my heart waketh*), and hardly own the voice that calls upon us, *till our beloved hath withdrawn himself*? Indeed, what is the whole of our life here but a dream? the entire scene of this sensible world but a *vision of the night*? where every man *walks but in a vain shew*? where we are mockt with shadows, and our credulous sense abus'd by impostures and delusive appearances? Nor are we ever secure from the most destructive mischievous deception, further than as our Souls are possess'd with the apprehensions, that this is the very truth of our case; and thence instructed to *consider*, and not to prefer the shadows of time before the great realities of eternity.

Nor is this sleep *casual*, but even *connatural* to our present state, the necessary result of so strict an union and commerce with the body; which is, to the in-dwelling Spirit,

Cant. 5. 2

Psal. 39. 6

* Viz. *Seneca*. Who at the time of his death sprinkled water upon the servants about him, *ad-ditâ voce, se liquorem illum libare Jo-vi libera-tori*. Tacit. *Annal.*

as a dormitory or charnel-house rather than a mansion. A Soul drench'd in sensuality (a *Lethe* that hath too little of fiction in it), and immur'd in a slothful putid flesh, sleeps as it were by *fate* not by *chance*, and is only capable of full relief by suffering a Dissolution; which it hath reason to welcome as a jubilee, and in the instant of departure to sacrifice as he did, * (with that easie and warrantable change, to make a Heathen expression Scriptural) *Jehove liberatori*, to adore and praise its great Deliverer; At least (accounts being once made up, and a *meetness* in any measure attained for the heavenly inheritance, &c.) hath no reason to regret or dread the approaches of the eternal day, more than we do the return of the Sun after a dark and long some night. But, as the sluggard doth nothing more unwillingly than forsake his bed, nor bears any thing with more regret, than to be awak'd out of his sweet sleep, though you should entice him with the pleasures of a Paradise to quit a smoaky loathsom Cottage; so fares it with the sluggish Soul, as if it were lodg'd in an enchanted Bed: 'tis so fast held by the charms of the body, all the glory of the other world is little enough to tempt it out, than which there is not a more deplorable Symptom of this sluggish slumbring state. So deep an oblivion (which you know is also naturally incident to sleep) hath seiz'd it of its own Country, of its alliances above, its relation to the Father and world of Spirits; it takes

this

this earth for its home, where 'tis both in exile and captivity at once: and (as a Prince, stoln away in his infancy, and bred up in a beggars shed) so little *seeks*, that it *declines* a better state. This is the degenerate torpid disposition of a Soul lost in flesh, and inwrapt in stupifying clay; which hath been deeply resented by some Heathens. So one brings in *Socrates* pathetically bewailing this oblivious dreaming temper of his Soul, "which" (saith he) had seen that pulchritude (you must pardon him here the conceit of its pre-existence) that neither humane voice could utter, nor eye behold; But that now, in this life, it had only some little remembrance thereof, as in a dream; being both in respect of *place* and *condition*, far removed from so pleasant sights, prest down into an earthly station, and there encompassed with all manner of dirt and filthiness, &c.

And to the same purpose *Plato* often speaks in the name of the same person; and particularly of the *winged state* of the good Soul *, when apart from the body, carried in its triumphant flying Chariot (of which he gives a large description, somewhat resembling *Solomons* rapturous Metaphor, *Before I was aware, my soul made me as the Chariots of Amminadib*); But being in the body, 'tis with it as with a Bird that hath lost its wings, it falls a sluggish weight to the earth.

Which indeed is the state even of the best, in a degree, within this Tabernacle. A sleepy torpor stops their flight; they can fall, but

πτερόν.
* In *Phædro.*

Cant. 6. 1.

Rom. 13.
1.Arctius,
Leza, &c.

not ascend; the *remains* of such drowsiness do still hang even about Saints themselves. The Apostle therefore calls upon *such*, to *wake out of sleep*; from that consideration (as we know men are not wont to sleep so intently towards morning) *that now their salvation was nearer than when they believed*, i. e. (as some judicious Interpreters understand that place) for that they were nearer death and eternity, than when they first became Christians (though this passage be also otherwise, and not improbably, interpreted). However,

Psal. 30. 5.

2. *The holy Souls release and dismissal from its earthly body* (which is that we propounded next to be considered) *will excuss and shake off this drowsie sleep*. Now is the happy Season of its awaking into the heavenly vital light of God; the blessed morning of that long desired day is now dawned upon it; the cumberfom night-vail is laid aside, and the garments of salvation and immortal glory are now put on. It hath past through the trouble and darkness of a wearisom night, and now is joy arrived with the morning (as we may be permitted to allude to those words of the *Psalmist*, though that be not supposed to be the peculiar sense).

I conceive my self here not concern'd *operously* to insist in proving, that the Souls of Saints sleep not in the interval between death and the general resurrection, but enjoy present blessedness. It being besides the design of a practical discourse, which rather intends the

the propounding and improvement of things acknowledg'd and agreed, for the advantage and benefit of them with whom they are so ; than the discussing of things dubious and controvertible. And what I here propound in order to a consequent improvement and application, should methinks pass for an acknowledg'd truth, among them that professedly believe, and seriously read and consider the Bible ; (For meer Philosophers that do not come into this account, 'twere impertinent to discourse with them from a Text of Scripture) and where my design only obliges me to intend the handling of that, and to deliver from it what may fitly be supposed to have its ground there ; unless their allegations did carry with them the *shew* of demonstrating the simple impossibility of what is asserted thence to the power of that God whose word we take it to be ; which I have not found any thing they say to amount to. That we have reason to presume it an acknowledged thing, among them that will be concluded by Scripture, *That the soul doth not sleep when it ceases to animate its earthly body*, many plain Texts do evince, which are amassed together by the reverend Mr. *Baxter** ; some of the principal whereof I would invite any that waver in this matter seriously to consider : As the words of our Saviour to the Thief on the Cross, *This day shalt thou be with me in Paradise*. That of the Apostle, *We are willing rather to be absent from the body, and present with the Lord*. And that, *I am in a straight,*

* In his
Saints
Test, p. 2.
6. 10.

Luk. 23.

43.

2 Cor. 5. 8.

Phil. 1. 23.
Heb. 12.
23.

straight, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ. That passage, *The Spirits of just men made perfect, &c.* Which are expressions so clear, that it is hard for an industrious Caviller to find what to except to them; and indeed, the very exceptions that are put in, are so frivolous, that they carry a plain confession there is nothing colourable to be said.

'Tis true, that divers of the Fathers and others have spo-

ken, some dubiously, some very diminishingly of the blessedness of separate Souls; many of whose words may be seen together in that elaborate Tractate of the learned Parker, *de descens. lib. secund. p. 77.* Yea, and his own assertion in that very page (be it spoken with reverence to the memory of so worthy a person) argues something gross, and I conceive, unwarrantable thoughts of the Souls dependence on a body of Earth. His words are, *Tertium vulnus* (speaking of the prejudices the Soul receives by its separation from the body) *omnes operationes etiam suas, quæ sunt præsertim ad extrâ, extinguit.* Where he makes it a difficulty to allow it any operations at all, as appears by the *præsertim* inserted. He first indeed denies it all operations, and then, more confidently and especially, those *ad extrâ.* And if he would be understood to exclude it only from its operations *ad extrâ* (if he take operations *ad extrâ* as that Phrase is wont to be taken) he must then mean by it, all such operations as have their objects, not only those that have their terms to which without the Agent, *i. e.* not only all transient, but all immanent acts that have their objects without them. As when we say, all Gods acts *ad extrâ* are free; we mean it even of his immanent acts that have their objects without him, though they do not *ponere terminum extrâ Deum*; as his election, his love of the elect. And so he must be understood to deny the separate Souls (and that with a *præsertim* too) the operations of *knowing God*, of loving him, and delighting in him; which are all operations *ad extrâ*, as having their objects *extrâ animam*, though their *terminus ad quem* be not so; which makes the condition of the separate Souls of Saints unspeakably inferiour to what it was in the body, and what should

Yea

Yea, and most evident it is from those Texts; not only that holy Souls sleep not, in that state of separation; but that they are awaked by it (as out of a former sleep) into a much more lively and vigorous activity than they enjoyed before; and translated into a state,

occasion
so dismal
thoughts
of that
state of se-
paration,
I see not.

Scripture gives no ground for them, but evidently enough speaks the contrary. Reason and Philosophy offer nothing, that can render the sense we put upon the forementioned plain Scriptures, self-contradictious or impossible. Yea, such as had no other light or guide, have thought the facility of the Souls operations, being separate from its earthly body, much greater by that very separation. And upon this score doth Saint Augustine, with great indignation, inveigh against the Philosophers (Plato more especially), because they judg'd the separation of the Soul from the body necessary to its blessedness. [*Quia videlicet ejus perfectam beatitudinem tunc illi fieri existimant cum omni prorsus corpore exuta, ad Deum simplex, & sola & quodammodo nuda redierit. De civit. Dei l. 13. c. 16*] unto which purpose the words of Philolaus Pythagoricus, of Plato, of Porphyrius, are cited by Ludovicus Vives, in his Comment upon that abovementioned passage. The first speaking thus — *Deposito corpore hominem Deum immortalem fieri.* The second thus — *Trahi nos à corpore ad ima, & à cogitatione superarum rerum subinde revocari: ideo relinquendum corpus, & hic quantum possumus & in altera vita prorsum, ut liberi & expediti, verum ipsi videamus & optimum amemus.* The third denies — *Aliter fieri beatum quenquam posse, nisi relinquat corpus & affigatur Deo.* I conceive it by the way not improbable, that the severity of that pious Father against that Dogma of the Philosophers, might proceed upon this ground, that what they said of the impossibility of being happy in an earthly body, he understood meant by them of an impossibility to be happy in any body at all; when 'tis evidently the common opinion of the Platonists, that the Soul is always united with some body or other, and that even the Demons have bodies (aereal or æthereal ones); which Plato himself is observed by St. Augustine to affirm, whence he would fasten a contradiction on him, *ibid.* not considering ('tis likely) that he would much less have made a difficulty, to concede such bodies also to humane Souls after they had lost their

terrestrial as much better than their former, as the *tortures of a Cross* are more ungrateful than the *pleasures of a Paradise*; these joys fuller of vitality, than *those sickly dying faintings*; as the *immediate presence, and close embraces* of the then presently become *Demons*.

In the mean time 'tis evident enough, the doctrine of the separate Souls present blessedness, is not destitute of the patronage and suffrage of Philosophers. And 'tis indeed the known opinion of as many of them as ever held its immortality (which all of all Ages and Nations have done, a very few excepted); for in as much as they knew nothing of the resurrection of the body, they could not dream of a *sleeping interval*.

And 'tis at least a shrewd presumption that nothing in reason lies against it, when no one instance can be given, among them that professedly gave up themselves to its only guidance, of any one, that granting the immortality of the Soul, and its separableness from its terrestrial body, ever denied the immediate blessedness of good Souls in that state of separation. Nor (if we look into the thing it self) is it at all more unapprehensible that the Soul should be independent on the body in its operations than in its existence?

If it be possible enough to form an unexceptionable notion of a spiritual being, distinct and separable from any corporeal substance (which the learned Doctor *More* hath sufficiently demonstrated in his Treatise of the immortality of the Soul), with its proper attributes, and powers peculiar to it self; what can reasonably withhold me from asserting, that being separate from the body, it may as well operate alone, (I mean exert such operations as are proper to such a being) as exist alone? That we find it here, *de facto*, in its present state, acting only with dependance on a body, will no more infer, that it can act no otherwise, that its present existence in a body will, that it can never exist out of it, neither whereof amounts to more than the trifling exploded argument *à non esse ad non posse*, and would be as good sense as to say, Such a one walks in his clothes, therefore out of them he cannot move a foot.

Yea, and the very *use* it self which the Soul now makes of corporeal organs and instruments, plainly evidences, that it doth

Lord

Lord of life are more delectable than a *mourn-ful disconsolate absence* from him (which the Apostle therefore tells us he desired *as far better*, and with an *Emphasis* which our *English* too faintly expresses; for he uses a double

exert *some* action wherein they assist it not. For it supposes

an operation *upon them* antecedent to any operation *by them*. Nothing can be the *instrument* which is not first the *subject* of my action; as when I use a Pen, I act *upon* it in order to my action *by* it, *i.e.* I impress a motion upon it, in order whereunto I use not that or any other such instrument; And though I cannot produce the designed effect, leave such characters so and so figured, without it; my hand can yet, without it, perform its own action, proper to it self, and produce many nobler effects. When therefore the Soul make use of a bodily organ, its action *upon* it must needs at last be without the ministry of any organ, unless you multiply to it body upon body *in infinitum*.

And if possibly, it perform not some meaner and grosser pieces of drudgery when out of the body, wherein it made use of its help and service before; that is no more a disparagement or diminution, than it is to the Magistrate, that *law and decency* permit him not to apprehend or execute a Malefactor with his own hand. It may yet perform those operations which are proper to it self; that is, such as are more noble and excellent, and immediately conducive to its own felicity.

Which sort of actions, as *Cogitation* for instance, and *Dilection*, though being done in the body, there is conjunct with them an agitation of the Spirits in the brain and heart; It yet seems to me more reasonable, that as to those acts, the Spirits are rather subjects than instruments at all of them; that the whole essence of these Acts is antecedent to the motion of the Spirits; and that motion *certainly* (but *accidentally*) consequent, only by reason of the *present*, but *soluble* union the Soul hath with the body. And that the purity and refinedness of those Spirits doth only *remove what would hinder* such acts, rather than contribute *positively* thereto. And so little is the alliance between a *thought*, and any bodily thing, even those very finest Spirits themselves; that I dare say, whoever sets himself closely and strictly to consider and debate the matter with his own faculties, will find it much more easily apprehensible, how the acts of

compa-

intellec- comparative [πολλῷ μᾶλλον κρείσσον] *by much*
 on and *more better*); and, as a *perfected*, i. e. a *crown-*
 volition *ed triumphant Spirit*, that hath attained the
 may be *end of its race* (as the words
 perform- *import in the agonistical noti-*
 ed *on **) is now in a more vivid
without those
 very cor- joyous state, than when, late-
 poreal
 Spirits ly, *toiling in a tiresome way*, it languished un-
 than by

* See Dr. Ham-
 monds annot. in
 loc.

them. However suppose them never so indispensably necessary to those more noble operations of the Soul, it may easily be furnished with them, and in greater plenty and purity, from the ambient air (or æther) than from a dull torpid body; with some part of which air, if we suppose it to contract a vital union, I know no rational principle that is wronged by the supposition, (though neither do I know any that can necessarily infer it).

As therefore the doctrine of the Souls activity out of this earthly body, hath favour and friendship enough from Philosophers; so I doubt not, but upon the most strict and rigid disquisition, it would be as much befriended (or rather righted) by Philosophy itself; And that their *reason* would afford it as direct, and more considerable defence than their *Authority*.

In the mean time, it deserves to be considered with some resentment, that this Doctrine should find the generality of learned Pagans more forward Advocates than some learned and worthy Patrons of the Christian Faith; which is only imputable to the undue measure and excess of an, otherwise, just zeal, in these latter, *for the resurrection of the body*; so far transporting them, that they became willing to let go one Truth, that they might hold *another* the faster; and to ransom *this* at the too dear (and unnecessary) expence of the *former*: Accounting, they could never make sure enough the resurrection of the body, without making the Souls dependence on it so absolute and necessary, that it should be able to do nothing but sleep in the mean while. Whereas it seems a great deal more unconceivable, how such a being as the Soul is, once quit of the entanglements and encumbrances of the body, *should sleep at all*, than how it should *act without the body*.

der many imperfections. And it is observable; that in the three former Scriptures that phrase, of *being with Christ*, or, *being present with him*, is the same which is used by the Apostle, *1 Thes. 4. 17.* to express the state of blessedness after the resurrection; intimating plainly, the *sameness* of the blessedness before and after. And though this phrase be also used to signify the present enjoyment Saints have of Gods gracious presence in this life (which is also in *nature*, and *kind* the same); yet it is plainly used in these Scriptures (the two latter more especially) to set out to us *such a degree* of that blessedness, that in comparison thereof, our *present being with Christ* is a *not-being with him*; our *presence with him*, now, an *absence from him*: *While we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord*, and, *I am in a strait betwixt two, desiring to depart* (or having a desire unto dissolution) *and to be with Christ, &c.* How strangely mistaken and disappointed had the blessed Apostle been, had his absence from the body, his dissolution, his release, set him further off from Christ, or made him less capable of converse with him, than before he was? And how absurd would it be to say, the *spirits of the just are perfected*, by being cast into a stupifying sleep; yea, or being put into any state, not better than they were in before? But their state is evidently far better. The body of death is now laid aside, and the weights of sin, that did so easily beset,

beset, are shaken off; flesh and sin are laid down together; the Soul is rid of its burthenfom bands and shackles, hath quitted its filthy darkfom prison (the usual place of laziness and sloth), is come forth of its drowsie dormitory, and the glory of God is risen upon it. 'Tis now come into the *world of realities*, where things appear *as they are*; no longer as in a dream, or vision of the night. The vital quickening beams of divine light are darting in upon it on every side, and turning it into their own likeness. The shadows of the evening are vanished, and fled away. It converses with no other objects but what are full themselves, and most apt to replenish it with energy and life. This cannot be but a joyful awaking, a blessed season of satisfaction and delight indeed, to the enlightned revived Soul. But,

Dan. 12. 2

Joh. 14. 12

2 Cor. 13

2 Thes. 4

&c.

II. It must be acknowledged, the further and more eminent season of this blessedness will be the *general Resurrection-day*, which is more expressly signified in Scripture by this term of [*awaking*]; as is manifest in many plain Texts, where 'tis either *expressly* thus used, or implied to have this meaning in the opposite sense of the word *sleep*.

What addition shall then be made to the Saints blessedness, lies more remote from our apprehension; in as much as Scripture states not the *degree* of that blessedness which shall intervene. We know, by a too sad instructive experience, the calamities of our present state, and can therefore more easily conceive, where-
in

In it is capable of betterment, by the deposition of a sluggish cumberfom body, where those calamities mostly have their spring: but then we know lefs where to fix our foot, or whence to take our rise, in estimating the additional felicities of that *future state*, when both the states to be compared are so unknown to us.

But *that* there will be great additions is plain enough. The *full* recompence of obedience, and devotedness to Christ, of forgoing all for him, is affixed by his promise to the *resurrection of the just*; The *judgment-day* gives every one his portion according to his works. Then must the holy obedient Christian hear from its Redeemers mouth, *Come ye blessed of the Father, inherit the Kingdom, &c.* Till then the Devils think their torment to be before their time. 'Tis when he shall appear we shall be like him, and see him as he is. That noted day is the day of being presented faultless with exceeding joy.

And divers things there are obviously enough to be reflected on, which cannot but be understood to contribute much to the increase and improvement of this inchoate blessedness.

The acquisition of a glorified body. For our vile bodies shall be so far transfigured, as to be made like [conform to] the glorious body of the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ. And this shall be when he shall appear from heaven, where Saints here below are required

μεταμορ-
ωσονται
το σώμα
αυτῶν
Phil. 3. 20,
21.

1 Thes. 4.
14, 15, 16.

Chap. 14.
14.

to have their commerce, as the enfranchised Citizens thereof, and from whence they are to continue, looking for him in the mean time. When he terminates and puts a period to that expectation of his Saints on earth, then shall that great change be made, *i. e.* when he actually appears, at which time the *trumpet sounds*, and even *sleeping dust it self awakes*; the hallowed dust of them that slept in Jesus first, who are then to come with him. This change may well be conceived to add considerably to their felicity. A natural congruity and appetite is now answered and satisfied, which did either lie dormant, or was under somewhat an anxious restless expectation before; neither of which could well consist with a state of blessedness, every-way already perfect. And that there is a real *desire and expectation* of this change, seems to be plainly intimated in those words of *Job*, *All the days of my appointed time will I wait till my change come*: Where he must rather be understood to speak of the resurrection than of death (as his words are commonly mistaken, and misapplied); as will appear by setting down the Context from the seventh verse, *For there is hope of a tree, if it be cut down, that it will sprout again, and that the tender branch thereof will not cease. Though the root thereof wax old in the earth, and the stock thereof die in the ground: yet through the sent of water, it will bud and bring forth boughs like a plant. But man dieth and wasteth away;*
yea,

yea, man giveth up the Ghost, and where is he? As the waters fail from the Sea, and the flood decayeth, and dryeth up; so man lyeth down, and riseth not till the heavens be no more: they shall not be awaked nor raised out of their sleep. O that thou wouldest hide me in the grave, that thou wouldest keep me secret till thy wrath be past, that thou wouldest appoint me a set time, and remember me! If a man die, shall he live again? All the days of my appointed time will I wait till my change come. Thou shalt call, and I will answer thee; thou wilt have a desire to the work of thy hands. He first speaks according to common apprehension, and sensible appearance, touching the hopeles state of man in death; as though it were less capable of reparation than that of some inferiour creatures, unto the end of *ver. 10.* And then gradually discovers his better hope; bewrays his Faith, as it were *obliquely*, touching this point; lets it break out, first, in some obscure glimmerings, *ver. 11, 12.* giving us, in his *Protasis*, a similitude not fully expressive of his seeming meaning, for waters and floods that fail may be renewed; and in his *Apodosis* more openly intimating, mans sleep should be only till the heavens were no more: which [till] might be supposed to signifie [never], were it not for what follows, *ver. 13.* where he expressly speaks his confidence by way of petition, that at a set and appointed time, God would remember him, so as to recall him out of the Grave: and at last,

being now minded to speak out more fully, puts the question to himself, *If a man dye, shall he live again?* and answers it, *All the days of my appointed time, i. e.* of that appointed time which he mention'd before, when God should revive him out of the dust; *will I wait till my change come; i. e.* that glorious change, when the corruption of a loathsom grave should be exchang'd for immortal glory; which he amplifies, and utters more expressly, *ver. 15, Thou shalt call, and I will answer; thou shalt have a desire to the work of thy hands:* Thou wilt not always forget to restore and perfect thy own creature.

And surely that *waiting* is not the *act* of his inanimate sleeping dust; but though it be spoken of the *person* totally gone into *Hades*, into the invisible state; 'tis to be understood of that part that should be capable of such an action; *q. d.* I, in that part that shall be still alive, shall patiently await thy appointed time of reviving me in that part also, which Death and the Grave shall insult over (in a temporary triumph) in the mean time; And so will the words carry a facile commodious sense, without the unnecessary help of an imagined Rhetorical Scheme of Speech. And then, that this *waiting* carries in it a *desirous expectation* of some additional good, is evident at first sight; which therefore must needs add to the satisfaction and blessedness of the expecting Soul. And wherein it may do so,
is

is not altogether unapprehensible. Admit, that a Spirit, had it never been imbodyed, might be as well without a body, or that it might be as well provided of a body out of other materials; 'tis no unreasonable supposition, that a *connate aptitude to a body*, should render humane Souls more happy in a body sufficiently attempered to their most noble operations. And how much doth relation and propriety endear things, otherwise mean and inconsiderable? or why should it be thought strange, that a Soul *connaturalized to matter*, should be more particularly inclined to a particular portion thereof? so as that it should appropriate such a part, and say *'tis mine*? And will it not be a pleasure, to have a vitality diffused through what even more remotely appertains to me, to have every thing belonging to the *Suppositum* perfectly vindicated from the tyrannous dominion of Death? The returning of the spirits into a benumb'd or sleeping toe or finger, adds a contentment to a man which he wanted before. Nor is it hence necessary the Soul should covet a re-union with every effluvious particle of its former body: A desire implanted by God in a reasonable Soul will aim at what is *convenient*, not what shall be *cumberfom* or *monstrous*.

And how pleasant will it be to contemplate and admire the wisdom and power of the great Creator in this so glorious a change, when I shall find a Clod of Earth, an Heap of Dust, refined into a Celestial purity and

1 Cor. 15.

brightness? when what was sown in corruption shall be raised in incorruption; what was sown in dishonour, is raised in glory; what was sown in weakness, is raised in power; what was sown a natural body, is raised a spiritual body? when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal, immortality, and death be wholly swallowed up in victory? So that this awaking may well be understood to carry that in it, which may bespeak it the proper season of the Saints consummate satisfaction and blessedness. But besides what it carries in it self, there are other (more extrinsecal) concurrents that do further signalize this season, and import a great increase of blessedness then to Gods holy ones.

The body of Christ is now compleated, the fullness of him that filleth all in all, and all the so nearly related parts cannot but partake in the perfection and reflected glory of the whole. There is joy in Heaven at the conversion of one sinner, though he have a troublesome Scene yet to pass over afterwards, in a tempting wicked unquiet world; how much more when the many sons shall be all brought to glory together?

The designs are all now accomplished, and wound up into the most glorious result and issue, whereof the Divine Providence had been, as in travel, for so many thousand years. 'Tis now seen how exquisite wisdom govern'd the world, and how

how steady a tendency the most intricate and perplexed Methods of Providence had, to one stated and most worthy end.

Specially the constitution, administration, and ends of the Mediators Kingdom, are now beheld in their exact aptitudes, order and conspicuous glory; when so blessed an issue and success shall commend and crown the whole undertaking.

The *Divine Authority* is now universally acknowledged and adored; his *Justice* is vindicated and satisfied; his *Grace* demonstrated and magnified to the uttermost. The whole assembly of Saints solemnly acquitted by publick sentence, presented spotless and without blemish to God, and adjudged to eternal blessedness. 'Tis the day of solemn triumph and jubilation, upon the finishing of all Gods works, from the creation of the world, *wherein the Lord Jesus appears to be glorified in his Saints, and admired in all that believe*: Upon which ensues the resignation of the *Mediators Kingdom* (all the ends of it being now attained) *that the Father himself may be immediately all in all*. How aptly then are the fuller manifestations of God, the more glorious display of all his Attributes, the larger and more abundant Effusions of himself, reserv'd (as the best Wine to the last) unto this joyful day? Created perfections could not have been before so absolute, but they might admit of improvement; their ca-

1 Thef. 1.

1 Cor. 15.

pacities not so large, but they might be extended further; and then who can doubt but that divine communications may also have a proportionable increase, and that upon the concurrence of so many great occasions they shall have so?

CHAP.

C H A P. IX.

An Introduction to the use of the Doctrine hitherto proposed. The Use divided into Inferences of Truth, Rules of Duty. 1. Inference, That Blessedness consists not in any sensual enjoyment. 2. Inference, The Spirit of man (since 'tis capable of so high a Blessedness) is a Being of high excellency.

AND now is our greatest work yet behind; the improvement of so momentous a truth, to the affecting and transforming of hearts: that (if the Lord shall so far vouchsafe his assistance and blessing) they may taste the sweetness, feel the power, and bear the impress and image of it. This is the work, both of greatest necessity, difficulty, and excellency, and unto which, all that hath been done hitherto, is but subservient and introductive. Give me leave therefore, Reader, to stop thee here, and demand of thee ere thou go further; Hast thou any design, in turning over these leaves, of bettering thy Spirit, of getting a more refined heavenly temper of Soul? art thou weary of thy dross,

Use.

*Dissoluti
est pectoris
in rebus se-
riis quere-
re volupta-
tem. Ar-
nob.*

drofs, and earth, and longing for the first fruits, the beginnings of glory? dost thou wish for a Soul meet for the blessedness hitherto described? What is here written is designed for thy help and furtherance. But if thou art looking on these pages with a wanton rolling eye, hunting for novelties, or what may gratifie a prurient wit, a coy and squeamish fancy; Go read a Romance, or some piece of Drollery; Know here's nothing for thy turn; and dread to meddle with matters of everlasting concernment without a serious spirit; Read not another line till thou have sigh'd out this request, Lord keep me from trifling with the things of Eternity. Charge thy Soul to consider, that what thou art now reading must be added to thy account against the great day. 'Tis amazing to think, with what vanity of mind the most weighty things of Religion are entertained amongst Christians. Things that should swallow up our Souls, drink up our spirits, are heard as a tale that is told, disregarded by most, scorn'd by too many. What can be spoken so important, or of so tremendous consequence, or of so confessed truth, or with so awful solemnity and premised mention of the sacred name of the Lord, as not to find either a very slight entertainment or contemptuous rejection? and this by persons avowing themselves Christians? We seem to have little or no advantage, in urging men upon their own principles, and with things they most readily and professedly assent to.

Their

Their hearts are as much untouch'd, and void of impression by the Christian Doctrine, as if they were of another Religion. How unlike is the Christian World to the Christian Doctrine! The Seal is fair and excellent, but the Impression is languid, or not visible. Where is that serious godliness, that heavenliness, that purity, that spirituality, that righteousness, that peace, unto which the Christian Religion is most aptly designed to work and form the spirits of men? We think to be saved by an empty name; and glory in the shew and appearance of that, the life and power whereof we hate and deride. 'Tis a reproach with us not to be *called a Christian*, and a greater reproach *to be one*. If such and such Doctrines *obtain not* in our professed Belief, we are Hereticks or Infidels; if they *do* in our practice, we are Precisians and Fools. To be so serious, and circumspect, and strict, and holy, to make the practice of godliness so much our business, as the known and avowed principles of our Religion do plainly exact from us (yea, though we come, as we cannot but do, unspeakably short of that required measure), is to make ones self a common derision and scorn. Not to be professedly religious is *barbarous*, to be so in good earnest *ridiculous*. In other things men are wont to act and practise according to the known Rules of their several Callings and Professions, and he would be reckon'd the common fool of the neighbour-hood that should not do so. The Husbandman that
should

should sow when others reap, or contrive his Harvest into the depth of Winter, or sow Fitches, and expect to reap Wheat; The Merchant that should venture abroad his most precious Commodities in a leaky bottom, without Pilot or Compass, or to places not likely to afford him any valuable return. In Religion only it must be accounted absurd, to be and do according to its known agreed Principles, and he a fool that shall but *practise* as all about him profess to *believe*. Lord! whence is this apprehended inconsistency between the profession and practice of Religion? what hath thus stupify'd and unman'd the world? that seriousness in Religion should be thought the character of a fool? that men must visibly make a mockery of the most Fundamental Articles of Faith only to save their reputation, and be afraid to be serious, lest they should be thought mad! Were the Doctrine here opened believed in earnest, were the due proper impress of it upon our spirits, or (as the Pagan Moralists expression is) were our minds *transfigured into it*; *what manner of persons should we be in all holy conversation and godliness?*

*Scientiam
qui didi-
cit, & fa-
cienda &
vitanda
præcepit,
nondum sapiens est,*

nisi in ea que didicit transfiguratus est animus. Sen. Ep. 94.

But 'tis thought enough to have it in our Creed, though never in our hearts; and such as will not *deride* the holiness it should produce, yet *endeavour* it not, nor go about to apply and urge truths upon their own souls to
any

any such purpose. What should turn into Grace and Spirit and Life, turns all into Notion and Talk; and men think all is well, if their head be fill'd, and their tongues tipt, with what should transform their souls, and govern their lives. How are the most awful Truths, and that should have greatest power upon mens Spirits, trifled with as matters only of speculation and discourse! They are heard but as empty airy words, and presently evaporate, pass away into words again; like food (as *Seneca* speaks) " that comes up presently, the same that it was " taken in; which (as he saith) profits not, " nor makes any accession to the body at all. A like case (as another ingeniously speaks), " as if sheep when they have been feeding " should present their Shepherds with the ve- " ry grafs it self which they have cropt, and " shew how much they had eaten. No, saith he, " they concoct it, and so yield them Wool and " Milk. And so (saith he) do not you (*viz.* " when you have been instructed) presently " go and utter words among the more ignorant (meaning they should not do so in a way of ostentation, to shew how much they knew more than others) " but works that follow " upon the concoction of what hath been by " words made known to them. (Let Christi- " ans be ashamed that they need this instructi- " on from Heathen Teachers).

*Non prodest
cibus, nec
corpori ac-
cedit, qui
statim sum-
ptus emit-
titur. Sen.
Epist.*

*Ἐπεὶ καὶ
τὰ πρό-
βατα, ὡς
χορὴν
φάγοντα
τοῖς ποι-
μέσιν ἐπι-
δεικνύει
τόσον ἔφα-
γεν, ἀλλὰ
τῷ νομῷ
ὡς πέ-
λαντα,
ἕριον ἔω
οἴσεται καὶ
ἄλλα. καὶ
οὐ τοίνυν,
μηδὲ ταχέ-
ως ῥήματα
τὰ ἔργα.*

*τοῖς ἰδιώταις ἐπιδείκνυται, ἀλλὰ ἐπ' αὐτῶν πεφθόγαν
Ἐπίσται.*

Thy

Thy words were found, and I did eat them (saith the Prophet), *and thy word was to me the joy and rejoycing of my heart.* Divine truth is only so far at present grateful, or useful for future, as 'tis received by faith and consideration, and in the love thereof into the very heart, and there turned (in *succum & sanguinem*) into real nutriment to the Soul: So shall man *live by the word of God.* Hence is the application of it (both *personal* and *ministerial*) of so great necessity.

If the Truths of the Gospel were of the same alloy with some parts of Philosophy, whose end is attained as soon as they are known; if the Scripture-Doctrine (the whole entire System of it) were not a Doctrine after godliness; if it were not designed to sanctifie and make men holy; or if the hearts of men did not reluctate, were easily receptive of its impressions; our work were as soon done, as such a Doctrine were nakedly proposed: But the state of the case in these respects is known and evident. The tenour and aspect of Gospel-Truth speaks its end; and experience too plainly speaks the oppositeness of mens spirits. All (therefore) we read and hear is lost if it be not urgently apply'd: (The Lord grant it be not then too).

Therefore, Reader, let thy mind and heart concur in the following improvement of this Doctrine, which will be wholly comprehended under these two heads,



Inferences of Truth, } that are consequent and
Rules of Duty } connatural thereto.

1. Inferences of Truth deducible from it.

True Blessedness consists not in any sensual enjoyment. The blessedness of a man can be but *one*; *most only one*. He can have but one highest and best good. And its proper character is, that it finally satisfies and gives rest to his spirit. This *the face and likeness of God doth*; his glory beheld and participated. Here then alone his full blessedness must be understood to lye.

Therefore as this might many other ways be evinced to be *true*; so it evidently appears to be the proper issue of the *present truth*, and is plainly proved by it. But alas! it needs a great deal more to be *pressed* than *proved*. O that it were but as *much considered* as it is *known*! The experience of almost six thousand years, hath (one would think sufficiently) testified the incompetency of every worldly thing to make men happy; that the present pleasing of our senses, and the gratification of our animal part is not blessedness; that men are still left unsatisfied notwithstanding. But the practice and course of the world is such, as if this were some late and rare experiment; which (for curiosity) every one must be trying over again. Every age renews the enquiry after in earthly felicity; the design is intail'd (as the

1. Infer.

Psal. 49.

the *Spanish* designs are said to be), and reinforced with as great a confidence and vigour from age to age, as if none had been baffled or defeated in it before; or that it were very likely to take at last. Had this been the alone folly of the *first age*, it had admitted some excuse; but that the world should still be cheated by the same so oft repeated impostures, presents us with a sad prospect of the deplorable state of mankind. *This their way is their folly, yet their posterity approve, &c.* The *wearied wits* and *wasted estates*, laid out upon the Philosophers Stone, afford but a faint defective representation of this case. What Chymistry can extract *heaven* out of a clod of clay? What art can make blessedness spring and grow out of this cold earth? If all created nature be vexed and tortured never so long, who can expect this Elixir? Yet after so many frustrated attempts, so much time, and strength, and labour lost, men are still as eagerly and vainly busie as ever; are perpetually tossed by unsatisfied desires, *labouring in the fire*, wearying themselves for very vanity, distracted by the uncertain (and often contrary) motions of a ravenous appetite, and a blind mind, that would be happy, and knows not how. With what sounding bowels, with what compassionate tears should the state of mankind be lamented, by all that understand the worth of a Soul? What serious heart doth not melt and bleed for miserable men, that are (through a just

*

nemc-

nemesis *) so perpetually mockt with shadows, cheated with false delusive appearances, insatuated and betrayed by their own senses. They walk but in a vain shew, disquieting themselves in vain; their days flee away as a shadow, their strength is only labour and sorrow; while they rise up early and lye down late, to seek rest in trouble and life in death. They run away from blessedness while they pretend to pursue it, and suffer themselves to be led down without regret to perdition, *as an ox to the slaughter, and a fool to the correction of the stocks, till a dart strike through their liver*: Descend patiently to the chambers of death, not so much as once thinking, *whither are we going?* dream of nothing but an earthly Paradise, till they find themselves amidst the infernal regions.

2. The Spirit of man (in as much as 'tis capable of such a blessedness), appears an excellent creature. Its natural capacity is supposed; for the Psalmist speaks of his own numerical person, the same that then writ; *I shall behold; shall be satisfied*; take away this suppositum, and it could not be so said; or as

(more whereof see under the next Inference) but there's an inclination, a certain *pondus naturæ* (as some Schoolmen speak) by which it propends towards it; or there is the *radix*, or *fundamentum*, or *capacitas* (as some others) *z. e.* that it not only may receive it; but that it may be elevated by grace, actively to concur, by its natural powers, as vital principles towards the attainment of it, according to that known saying of Saint Augustine, *Posse credere naturæ est hominis, &c.*

* *Ira Dei est ista vita mortalis, ubi homo vanitatis similis factus est, & dies ejus velut umbra prætereunt, &c.* Aug. de Civ. Dei l. 22. c. 24.

2. Infer. Not that this blessedness can be attained by meer human endeavours,

in Job's words; *I shall behold him, and not another for me*; It would certainly be another, not the same. Judg hence the excellency of an human Soul (the principal subject of this blessedness) without addition of any new natural powers, 'tis capable of the vision of God; of partaking unto satisfaction the divine likeness. And is not that an excellent creature, that is capable not only of surveying the creation of God, passing through the several ranks and orders of created Beings; but of ascending to the *Being of beings*, of contemplating the divine excellencies, of beholding the bright and glorious face of the blessed God himself; till it have lookt it self into His very likeness, and have his intire image inwrought into it.

The dignity then of the Spirit of man is not to be estimated by the circumstances of its present state, as 'tis here clad with a fordid flesh, inwrapt in darkness, and groveling in the dust of the earth: but consider the improveableness of its natural powers and faculties; the high perfections it may attain, and the foundations of how glorious a state are laid in its very nature. And then who can tell, whether its *possible advancement* is more to be *admired*, or its *present calamity deplor'd*. Might this consideration be permitted to settle and fix it self in the hearts of men; could any thing be so grievous to them, as their so vast distance from such an attainable blessedness: or any thing be so industriously avoided, so earnestly abhorred, as that

that viler dejection and abasement of themselves; when they are so low already by Divine disposition, to descend lower by their own wickedness; when they are already fallen as low as Earth, to precipitate themselves as low as Hell. How generous a disdain should *that thought* raise in mens spirits, of that vile servitude to which they have subjected themselves, a servitude to brutal lusts, to sensual inclinations and desires; as if the highest happiness they did project to themselves were the satisfaction of these! Would they not with an heroick scorn *turn away their eyes from beholding vanity*, did they consider their own *capacity* of beholding the divine glory? could they satisfy themselves to become * *like the beasts that perish*, did they think of being satisfied with the *likeness of God*? And who can conceive unto what degree this aggravates the *sin* of man, that he *so little minds* (as it will their *misery, that shall fall short of*) this blessedness! *They had spirits capable of it.* Consider thou sensual man whose happiness lies in *Colours, and Tastes, and Sounds*, (as the Moralist ingeniously speaks) that herd'st thy self with brute creatures, and aimest no higher than they: as little lookest up, and art as much a stranger to the thoughts and desires of Heaven; thy Creation did not set thee so low; they are where they were; but thou

* Voluntas bonum pecoris est
Hunc tu (non dico inter viros sed) inter homines numeras? cujus summi bonum saporibus, ac coloribus, ac sonis constat? excedat ex hoc animalium

numero pulcherrimo, ac diis secundo; multis aggregetur animalibus nato. Sen. Ep. 92.

art fall'n from thy excellency. God did not make thee a brute Creature, but thou thyself. Thou hast yet a spirit about thee, that might understand its own original, and alliance to the Father of Spirits; that hath a designation in its nature to higher converses and employments. Many myriads of such spirits, of no higher (original) excellency than thy own, are now in the presence of the Highest Majesty; are *prying* into the eternal glory, contemplating the perfections of the Divine Nature, beholding the unveiled face of God, which transfuses upon them its own satisfying likeness. Thou art not so low-born, but thou might'st attain this state also. That Sovereign Lord and Author of all things, calls thee to it; his *goodness* invites thee, his *authority* enjoins thee to turn thy thoughts and designs this way. Fear not to be thought immodest or presumptuous; * 'tis but a dutiful ambition; an obedient aspiring. Thou art under a *Law* to be thus happy; nor doth it bind thee to any *natural impossibility*; it designs *instructions* to thee, not *delusion*; *guidance*, not *mockery*. When thou art required to apply and turn thy Soul to this blessedness; 'tis not the same thing, as if thou wert bidden to remove a Mountain, to pluck down a star, or create a World. Thou art here put upon nothing but what is agreeable to the primeval nature of man; and though it be to a vast height, thou must ascend; 'tis by so easie and familiar *Methods*, by so apt Gradations, that thou

* *Hic Deus æquat, illò tendit, originis sue memor. Nemo, improbè, cò conatur ascendere unde descendat*
socii vis sumus & membra,
Æc. Sen.
 Ep. 92.

thou wilt be sensible of no violence done to thy nature in all thy way. Do but make some tryals with thy self; thou wilt soon find *nothing is the hindrance but an unwilling heart*. Try however (which will suffice to let thee discern thy own capacity, and will be a likely means to make thee willing) how far thou canst understand and trace the way (complying with it at least as reasonable) that leads to this blessedness. Retire a little into thy self; forget a while thy relation to this sensible world; summon in thy self-reflecting and considering powers: Thou wilt presently perceive thou art not already happy, thou art in some part unsatisfied; and thence will easily understand, in as much as thou art not happy in thy self, that it must be something, as yet without thee, must make thee so; and nothing can make thee happy, but what is in that respect better than thy self; or hath some perfection in it, which thou findest wanting in thy self. A little further discourse or reasoning with thy self, will easily perswade thee, thou hast something better about thee than that luggage of flesh thou goest with to and fro; for thou well knowest, *that* * is not capable of reason and discourse; and that the power of doing so is an higher perfection than any

* Λόγισ-
μος δὲ καὶ
νόος, ἔκτετι
ταῦτα
σώματι

ἰδῶσιν αὐτὰ, καὶ γὰρ τὸ ἔργον αὐτῶν ἔσθ' ὁργάνων τελεῖται τῷ
σώματι ἐμπόδιον γὰρ τῷ, εἴ τις κινῶ ἐν ταῖς σκέψεσι περὶ αὐτῶν.
Plotin. Ennead. 4. lib 3.

thou canst entitle it to ; and that therefore, besides thy bulkie material part, thou must have such a thing as a *spirit* or *soul* belonging to thee, to which, *that* and thy *other* *perfections* (not competible to gross matter) may agree. Thou wilt readily assent, that thou canst never be happy, while thy better and more noble part is unsatisfied ; and that it can only be satisfied with something suitable and connatural to it. That therefore thy happiness must lie in something more excellent than this material or sensible world, otherwise it cannot be grateful and suitable to thy Soul, yea, in something that may be better, and more excellent than thy Soul it self, otherwise how can it *better* and *perfect* that *. As thou canst not but acknowledge thy Soul to be spiritual and im-

* *Sicut non est à carne, sed super car-*

nem, quod carnem facit vivere : sic non est ab homine, sed super hominem, quod hominem facit beatè vivere. D. Aug. de Civit. Dei lib. 19. c. 25.

material, so if thou attend thou wilt soon see cause to acknowledg a spiritual or immaterial being better and more perfect than thy own Soul. For *its* perfections were not *self-originate*, they were therefore *derived* from something, for that reason confessedly more excellent ; whence at last also thou wilt find it unavoidably impos'd upon thee, to apprehend and adore a *being absolutely perfect*, and than which there cannot be a more perfect ; the first subject and common fountain of all perfections, which hath them
underived

underived in himself, and can derive them unto inferiour created beings *. Upon this eternal and self-essential being, the infinitely blessed God, thou necessarily dependest, and owest therefore constant subjection and obedience to him. Thou hast indeed offended

* ut in ordine causarum efficientium, ita & in gradibus virtutis &

perfectionis, non datur progressus in infinitum: sed oportet sit aliqui prima & summa perfectio. Pet. Molin. de cognitione Dei. Not to insist upon what hath been much urged by learned men of former and latter (yea, and of the present) time, [that whosoever denies the existence of an absolutely perfect being, contradicts himself in the denial, inasmuch as necessity of existence is included in the very subject of the negation] some accounting it a Sophism, and it being unreasonable here to discuss it.

him, and art thereby cut off from all interest in him, and intercourse with him; but he hath proclaimed in his Gospel, his willingness to be reconciled, and that through the sufferings, righteousness, and intercession of his only begotten Son, thy merciful Redeemer, the way is open for thy restitution and recovery; that thou may'st partake from him what-ever perfection is wanting to thy blessedness. Nothing is required from thee in order hereunto, but that relying on and submitting to thy Redeemers gracious conduct, thou turn thy mind and heart towards thy God, to know him, and conform to him; to view and imitate the Divine perfections; the faithful endeavour and inchoation whereof, will have this issue and reward, the clear vision and full participation of them. So that the way and work differ not, in nature and

kind, from thy *end* and *reward*; thy *duty* from thy *blessedness*. Nor are either repugnant to the natural constitution of thy own Soul. What violence is there done to reasonable nature in all this? or what can hinder thee herein, but a most culpably averse and wicked heart? Did thy *reason* ever turn off thy Soul from God? was it not thy *corruption* only? What vile images dost thou receive from earthly objects, which deform thy Soul, while thou industriously averteth thy Makers likeness that would perfect it? How full is thy mind and heart of vanity? how empty of God? Were this through natural incapacity, thou wert an innocent creature; it were thy *infelicity* (negative I mean) not thy *crime*; and must be resolved into the *Sovereign will of thy Creator*, not thy *own disobedient will*. But when this shall appear the true state of thy case, and thou shalt hear it from the mouth of thy Judg; "Thou
 "didst not like to retain me in thy knowledg
 "or love; thou had reason and will to use
 "about meaner objects, but none for me;
 "thou couldest sometimes have spared me a
 "glance, a cast of thine eye at least, when
 "thou didst rather chuse it should be in the
 "ends of the earth: A thought of me had
 "cost thee as little, might as soon have been
 "thought, as of this or that vanity; but thy
 "heart was not with me. I banish thee,
 "therefore, that presence which thou never
 "loved'st. I deny thee the vision thou didst
 "always shun, and the impression of my
 "likeness

“likeness which thou didst ever hate. I eternally abandon thee to the darkness and deformities which were ever grateful to thee. “Thine is a *self-created hell*; the fruit of thy own choice; no invitations or persuasions of mind could keep thee from it. How wilt thou *excuse thy fault*, or *avert thy doom*! what Arguments or Apologies shall *defend thy cause* against these pleadings? Nay, what Armour shall *defend thy Soul* against its own wounding self-reflections hereupon? When every Thought shall be a Dart; and a convicted Conscience an ever-gnawing Worm, a fiery Serpent with endless involutions ever winding about thy heart?

It will now be sadly thought on, how often thou saw'st thy way and declin'dst it, knew'st thy duty and did'st wave it; understood'st thy interest and did'st slight it; approv'dst the things that were more excellent and did'st reject them? How often thou didst prevaricate with thy light, and run counter to thine own eyes; while things, confessedly, most worthy of thy thoughts and pursuits were overlook'd; and empty shadows eagerly pursu'd. Thy own heart will now feelingly tell thee, it was not want of capacity, but *inclination*, that cut thee off from blessedness. Thou wilt now bethink thy self, that *when life and immortality were brought to light before thy eyes in the Gospel*; and thou wast told of this future blessedness of the Saints, and *prest to follow holiness, as without which thou could'st not see God*; it was a *reasonable*

sonable man was spoken to, that had a power to understand, and judg, and chuse; not a Stone or a Brute. Thy capacity of this blessedness makes thee capable also of the most exquisite torment; and reflected on, actually infers it. How passionately (but vainly) wilt thou then cry out, "O that I had fill'd up the place of any the meanest Creature throughout the whole Creation of God, that I had been a Gnat, or a Fly, or had never been, rather than to have so noble abused powers eternally to reckon for! Yea, and thou must reckon for not only the actual light, and good impressions thou hadst, but even all thou wast capable of, and might'st have attained. Thou shalt now recount with anguish and horror (and rend thy own Soul with the thoughts) what thou mightest now have been; how excellent and glorious a creature! hadst thou not contriv'd thy own misery, and conspir'd with the Devil against thy self, how to deform and destroy thy own Soul. While this remembrance shall always afresh return, that nothing was enjoined thee as a duty, or propounded as thy blessedness, but what thou wast made capable of; and that it was not fatal necessity, but a wilful choice made thee miserable.

CHAP. XII.

Inference 3. That a change of heart is necessary to this blessedness. The pretences of ungodly men, whereby they would avoid the necessity of this change. Five considerations proposed in order to the detecting the vanity of such pretences. A particular discussion and refutation of those pretences.

3. **T**IS a mighty change must pass upon the Souls of men in order to their enjoyment of this Blessedness. This equally follows from the consideration of the nature and substantial parts of it, as of the *qualifying righteousness* pre-required to it. A little reflection upon the common state and temper of mens spirits, will soon inforce an acknowledgment that the Vision of God, and conformity to him, are things above their reach, and which they are never likely to take satisfaction in, or at all to favour, till they become otherwise disposed than before the renovating change they are. The Text expresses no more in stating the qualified subject of this *blessedness* [*in righteousness*] than it evidently implies in the account it gives of
of

of this *blessedness* it self, that it lies [*in seeing God, and being satisfied with his likeness*].

As soon as it is considered, that the blessedness of Souls is stated here, what can be a more obvious reflection than this; Lord, then how great a change must they undergo! what such Souls be blessed in seeing and partaking the Divine likeness, that never loved it! were so much his enemies!

'Tis true they are *naturally capable* of it, which speaks their original excellency; but they are *morally incapable*, i.e. *indisposed* and *averse*, which as truly, and most sadly speaks their present vileness; and the sordid abject temper they now are of. They are destitute of no *natural powers* necessary to the attainment of this blessedness; but in the mean time have them so depraved by impure and vitious tinctures that they cannot relish it, or the means to it. They have reasonable Souls furnished with intellectual and elective faculties, but labouring under a manifold distemper and disaffection; that they *cannot receive*, they *cannot savour* the things of God, or what is Spiritual. They want the *ευδωλία* (as we may express it), the well-disposedness for the Kingdom of God, intimated *Luk. 9. 62.* the *ικανότης*, the meetness, the aptitude, or idoneity for the inheritance of the Saints in light, *Col. 1. 12.*

A settled aversion from God hath fastned its roots in the very spirit of their minds (for that is stated as the prime subject of the change to be made) and how they can take pleasure

*Capax est
noster ani-
mus, per-
fertur illi.
si vitia
non depri-
mant. Sen.
Epist. 92.
1 Cor. 2.
14.
Rom. 8. 5.*

Eph. 4. 23.

pleasure then in the vision and participation of his glory? whereas by beholding the glory of the Lord, they should be changed into the same image; a vail is upon the heart till it turn to the Lord, as was said concerning the Jews, 2 Cor. 3, *The God of this world hath blinded their minds, lest (that transforming light) the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them,* Chap. 4. 4, *They are alienated from the Life of God, through their ignorance and blindness of heart.* The life they chuse is to be *ἀθεοὶ ἐν κόσμῳ*, Atheists, or without God in the world. They like not to retain God in their knowledge: are willingly ignorant of him. Say to him, depart from us, we desire not the knowledge of thy ways. The Lord looks down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if any will understand, if any will seek after God; and the result of the enquiry is, *There is none that doth good, no not one.* They are haters of God, as our Saviour accused the Jews, and Saint Paul the Gentiles, *Are lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God.* Their understandings are dark, their minds vain, their wills obstinate, their consciences seared, their hearts hard and dead, their lives one continued Rebellion against God and a defiance to heaven. At how vast distance are such souls from such blessedness! The notion and nature of blessedness must sure be changed, or the temper of their Spirits. Either they must have new hearts created, or a new Heaven, if ever they be happy. And such is the stupid do-

rage

Eph. 4. 18.

Ch. 2. 12:

Rom. 1. 28.

2 Pet. 3.

Job 21. 14.

Psal. 53.

Joh. 15.

Rom. 1.

Psal. 36, 1,
2.

Psal. 50.

tage of vain man, he can more easily persuade himself to believe, that the Sun it self should be transformed into a dunghil, that the Holy God should lay aside his Nature, and turn Heaven into a place of impure darkness; than that *he himself* should need to undergo a change. O the powerful insatiation of *self-love*, that men in the *gall of bitterness* should think 'tis well with their spirits, and fancy themselves in a case good enough to enjoy Divine pleasures; that (as the Toads venom offends not it self) their loathsom wickedness, which all good men detest, is a pleasure to them; and while 'tis as the poison of Asps under their lips, they roll it (as a dainty bit, revolve it in their thoughts with delight! Their wickedness speaks it self out to the very hearts of *others*, while it never affects their *own*, and is found out to be hateful, while they still continue flattering themselves. And because they are without spot *in their own eyes*; they adventure so high, as to presume themselves so in the pure eyes of God too; and instead of designing to be *like God*, they already imagine him *such a one as themselves*. Hence their allotment of time (in the whole of it, the Lord knows little enough) for the working out of their salvation spends apace; while they do not so much as understand their business. Their *measured hour* is almost out; an *immense Eternity* is coming on upon them; and lo they stand as men that cannot find their hands. Urge them to the speedy serious endeavour

deavour of an *heart-change*, earnestly to intend the business of regeneration, of becoming new creatures; they seem to understand it as little, as if they were spoken to in an unknown tongue; and are in the like posture with the confounded builders of *Babel*, they know not what we mean, or would put them upon. They wonder what we would have them do. "They are (say they) "*Orthodox* Christians: They believe all the "*Articles of the Christian Creed*: They detest "*all Heresie and false Doctrine*: They are no "*strangers to the House of God*; but diligently attend the enjoined Solemnities of "*Publick Worship*: Some possibly can say, "*they are sober, just, charitable, peaceable*; "*and others that can boast less of their virtues, yet say, they are sorry for their sins,* "*and pray God to forgive them. And if we urge them concerning their Translation from the state of Nature to that of Grace, their becoming new creatures, their implantation into Christ*: They say they have been "*Baptized, and therein regenerate, and what "*would we have more?

But to how little purpose is it to equivocate with God? to go about to put a fallacy upon the Judge of Spirits? or escape the animadversion of his fiery flaming eye? or elude his determinations, and pervert the true intent and meaning of his most established Constitutions and Laws.

Darest thou venture thy Soul upon it? that this is all God means, by *having a*
new

Psal. 51. *new heart created, a right spirit renewed in us :*
 Eph. 2. 10. *by being made Gods workmanship, created in*
 2 Cor. 5. *Christ Jesus unto good works : by becoming*
 17. *new creatures, old things being done away, all*
 Eph. 4. 23, *things made new : by so learning the truth as*
 24. *it is in Jesus, to the putting off the old man —*
and putting on the new ; which after God is
created in righteousness and true holiness ; by
 Jam. 1. 18. *being begotten of Gods own will by the word of*
truth ; to be (the ἀπαρχὴ) the chief excel-
lency, the prime glory (as certainly his new
creature is his best creature), the first fruits,
or the devoted part of all his creatures ; by
 Gal. 4. 19. *having Christ formed in us ; by partaking the*
 2 Pet. 1. 4. *divine nature, the incorruptible seed, the seed*
 1 Pet. 1. *of God ; by being born of God, Spirit of Spi-*
 Joh. 3. 6. *rit ; as of earthly Parents we are born flesh of*
flesh. When my eternal blessedness lies upon
it, had I not need to be sure that I hit the
true meaning of these Scriptures ? especially,
that at least I fall not below it, and rest not
in any thing short of what Scripture makes
indispensably necessary to my entring into
the Kingdom of God ?

I professedly wave controversies ; and 'tis
 pity so practical a business as this I am now
 upon, and upon which Salvation so much
 depends, should ever have been encumbered
 with any controverſie. And therefore (though
 I shall not digress so far, as to undertake a
particular and distinct handling here of this
 work of God upon the Soul, yet) I shall
 propound something in general, touching
 the *change* necessarily previous to this blef-
 sedness,

fedness, (wherein that necessity is evidenceable from the nature of this blessedness which is the business I have in hand) that I hope will pass among Christians for acknowledged truth, not liable to dispute, though the Lord knows it be little considered. My design being rather to awaken Souls to the consideration of *known* and *agreed* things, than to perplex them about *unknown*. Consider therefore :

First, *That the holy Scriptures, in the fore-mentioned and other like passages, do plainly hold forth the necessity of a real change to be made in the inward temper and dispositions of the Soul; and not a relative only, respecting its state.* This cannot be doubted by any that acknowledg a *real inherent depravation*, propagated in the nature of man. No, nor denied by them that grant such a corruption to be general and continued among men; whether by imitation only, or what way soever. And willing I am to meet men upon their own principles and concessions, however erroneous or short of the truth they may be, while they are yet improvable to their own advantage. Admit that *regeneration*, or the *new-birth* includes a *change of our relation and state God-ward*; doth it therefore *exclude* an intrinsic subjective change of the inclinations and tendencies of the Soul? And if it did, yet other terms are more peculiarly appropriate to, and most expressly point out *this very change alone*; As that of *conversion*, or of *turning to God*; of *being re-*
R
newed

newed in the spirit of the mind; of putting off the old man that is corrupt by, &c. and putting on the new man, which is created in righteousness and true holiness, &c. of partaking the divine nature; It matters not if this or that expression be understood by some, more principally in another sense, the *thing it self*, of which we speak, is as clearly expressed, and as urgently pressed (as there was cause) as any other matter whatsoever throughout the whole Book of God. But men are slower of belief, as to this great Article of the Christian Doctrine, than to most (I might say *any*) other. This truth more directly assaults the strong holds of the Devil in the hearts of men, and is of more immediate tendency to subvert his Kingdom; Therefore they are most unwilling to have it *true*, and most hardly believe it. Here they are so madly bold, as to give the lie to all Divine Revelations; and though they are never so plainly told *without holiness none shall see God*, they will yet maintain the contrary belief and hope, till *go ye cursed*, vindicate the Truth of God, and the flame of Hell be their eternal confutation. Lord! that so plain a thing will not enter into the hearts of men; that so urgent inculcations will not yet make them apprehend that their Souls must be renewed or perish! That they will still go dreaming on with that mad conceit, that (what-ever the Word of God says to the contrary) they may yet with unsanctified hearts get to Heaven! How deplorable
is

is the case, when men have no other hope left them, but that the God of truth will prove false, and bely his word; yea, and overturn the nature of things to save them in their sins! Thou that livest under the Gospel, hast thou any pretence for thy (seeming) ignorance in this matter? couldst thou ever look one quarter of an hour into the Bible, and not meet with some intimation of this truth? What was the ground of thy mistake? What hath beguiled thee into so mischievous a delusion? How could such an imagination have place in thy Soul, That a Child of Wrath *by nature* could become a Child of God without *receiving a new nature*? That so vast a change could be made in thy state, without any at all in the temper of thy spirit.

Secondly, Consider, *That this change is in its own nature, and the design of God who works it, dispositive of the Soul for Blessedness.*

'Tis sufficiently evident from the consideration of the state it self of the unrenewed Soul, that a change is necessary for this end; such a Soul in which it is not wrought, when once its drowsie stupifying slumber is shaken off, and its reflecting power awakened, must needs be a perpetual torment to it self. So far it is remov'd from blessedness, it is its own Hell, and can fly from misery and death no faster than from it self. Blessedness composes the Soul, reduces it to a consistency; it infers (or rather is) a self-satisfaction, a well-pleasedness and content-

αὐτοφρον.

ment with one self, inrich'd and fill'd with the divine fulness. Hence 'tis *at rest*, not as being pent in, but contentedly dwelling with it self, and keeping within its own bounds of its own accord. The unrenewed soul can no more contain it self within its own terms or limits, is as little self-consistent, as a raging flame, or an impetuous tempest. Indeed its own lusts perpetually (as so many Vultures) rend and tear it; and the more when they want external objects; then (as hunger) their fury is all turned inward; and they prey upon intestines, upon their own subject; but unto *endless torment*, not *satisfaction*. In what posture is this Soul for rest and blessedness.

The *nature of this change* sufficiently speaks its own design. 'Tis an introduction of (the *primordia*) the very principles of blessedness.

1 Pet. 1. 3,

4.

Col. 1. 12.

2 Cor. 5. 5.

And Scripture as plainly speaks the design of God: He *regenerates to the undefiled inheritance: makes meet for it: works, forms, or fashions the Soul unto that self-same thing* viz. *to desire and groan after that blessed state; and consequently to acquiesce and rest therein.* Therefore, vain man, that dremeest of being happy without undergoing such a change; how art thou trying thy skill to abstract a thing from it self? for the pre-required righteousness whereunto thou must be changed, and this blessedness are in *kind* and *nature* the same thing, as much as a *child* and a *man*. Thou pretendest thou would'st

would'st have that perfected which thou canst not endure should ever be begun : Thou fettest thy self to prevent and suppress what, in its own nature, and by Divine Ordination tends to the accomplishment of thy own pretended desires. Thou wouldest have the Tree without ever admitting the Seed or Plant : Thou would'st have *heat*, and canst not endure the least *warmth* ; so besotted a thing is a carnal heart !

Thirdly, *That in as much as this blessedness consists in the satisfactory sight and participation of Gods own likeness, unto whom the Soul is habitually averse, this change must chiefly stand in its becoming holy or godly, or in the alteration of its dispositions and inclinations as to God.* Otherwise the design and end of it is not attained. We are required to *follow peace with all men* (but here the accent is put) *and holiness, without which no man shall see God,* Heb. 12. 14. 'Tis therefore a vain thing, in reference to what we have now under consideration, *viz. the possibility of attaining this blessedness,* to speak of any other changes that fall short of, or are of another kind from the right disposition of heart Godward. This *change* we are now considering, is no other than the proper adequate impress of the Gospel-discovery upon mens spirits, (as we have largely shewn the righteousness is, in which it terminates). The sum of that discovery is, [*That God is in Christ reconciling the world unto himself*] the proper impress of it, therefore is the *actual*

3.

2 Cor. 5.
18, 19.

reconciliation of the Soul to God through Christ; a friendly well-affected posture of spirit towards God, our last end and highest good; and towards Christ our only way (since the Apostacy) of attaining and enjoying it. To rest therefore in any other good dispositions or endowments of mind, is as much besides the business, as impertinent to the present purpose, as if one design'd to the *Government of a City*, should satisfy himself that he hath the skill to *Play well on a Lute*, or he that intends *Physick*, that he is well seen in *Architecture*. The general scope and tenor of the Gospel tells thee, O man, plainly enough, what the business is thou must intend (if thou wilfully overlook it not) in order to thy blessedness. 'Tis written to draw thee into fellowship with the Father and the Son, that thy joy may be full. It aims at the bringing of thee into a state of blessedness in God through Christ; and is therefore the instrument by which God would form thy heart thereto. The Seal by which to make the first Impression of his Image upon thee. Which will then as steddily incline and determine thy soul towards him; as the magnetick touch ascertains the posture of the Needle. Wherefore doth he there discover his own heart, but to melt, and win, and transform thine? The word of grace is the seed of the new Creature. Through the exceeding great and precious promises, he makes Souls partake of the divine nature. Grace is, firstly reveal'd to teach the denial of ungodliness,

1 Joh. 1.
1, 2, 3, 4.

liness, &c. Turn thy thoughts hither then, and consider what is there done upon thy soul by the Gospel, to attempt and conform it to God? Wherein has thy heart answered this its visible design and intendment? Thou art but in a delirious dream till thou seriously bethinkest thy self of this. For otherwise how can the aversion of thy heart from him escape thy daily observation; thou canst not be without evidences of it; what pleasure dost thou take in retiring thy self with God? what care to redeem time *only* for converse with him? had'st thou not rather be any where else? In a time of vacancy from business and company, when thou hast so great a variety of things before thee, among which to chuse an object for thy thoughts, Do they not naturally fall upon any thing rather than God? Nor do thou think to shift off this by assigning the *meer natural cause*; for if there were not somewhat more in the matter, why is it not so with all? He upon whom this change had passed could say; *My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness; and my mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips, when I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee in the night-watches. My meditation of him shall be sweet; I will be glad in the Lord. How precious are thy thoughts unto me, O God, how great is the sum of them? If I should count them, they are more in number than the sand; when I awake, I am still with thee. Yea, in the way of thy judgments, O God, have we waited for thee;*

Psal. 63. 5, 6.

Psal. 104.

34.

Psal. 139.

17, 18.

Isa. 26. 8.

the desire of our soul is to thy name, and to the remembrance of thee. With my soul have I desired thee in the night, yea, with my spirit within me will I seek thee early, &c. Therefore plain it is, there is a *sinful distemper* to be wrought out, an *ungodly disposition of heart*, which it concerns thee, not to rest till thou see removed.

Fourthly, Consider, *That to become godly, or this change of inclinations and dispositions towards God, is that which of all other the Soul doth most strongly reluctate and strive against; and which therefore it undergoes with greatest difficulty and regret.* 'Tis an horrid and amazing thing it should be so, but Scripture and experience leave it undoubted that so it is. What! that the highest Excellency, the most perfect Beauty, Loveliness, and Love it self should so little attract a reasonable spiritual-being that issued thence? His own off-spring so unkind! what more than monstrous unnaturalness is this, so to disaffect ones own Original! 'Twere easie to accumulate and heap up considerations that would render this astonishingly strange. So things are reckon'd upon several accounts, either as they are more rare and unfrequent (which is the vulgar way of estimating wonders), or as their causes are of more difficult investigation; or (if they are moral wonders) as they are more unreasonable or causeless; upon this last account, *Christ marvelled at the Jews unbelief; And so is this hatred justly marvelous; as being altogether without a cause?*

Mark. 6. 6.

Joh. 15. 25.

But

But thence to infer there is no such thing, were to dispute against the Sun. No truth hath more of *light and evidence in it*, though none more of *terror and prodigie*. To how many thousand objects is the mind of man indifferent? can turn it self to this or that; run with facility all points of the Compass, among the whole Universe of Beings: But assay only to draw it to God, and it recoils; thoughts and affections revolt, and decline all converse with that blessed object! Toward other objects, it freely opens and dilates it self, as under the benign beams of a warm Sun; there are placid complacential emotions; amicable sprightly converses and embraces. Towards God only it is presently contracted and shut up; Life retires, and it becomes as a Stone, cold, rigid, and impenetrable: The quite contrary to what is required (which also those very precepts do plainly imply); 'tis alive to sin, to the world, to vanity; but crucified, mortified, dead to God and Jesus Christ. Rom. 6. 11.

The natures of many men that are harsh, fierce and savage, admit of many cultivations and refinings; and by moral precept, the exercise and improvement of reason, with a severe animadversion and observance of themselves, they become mild, tractable, gentle, meek. (The story of the *Physiognomists* guess at the temper of *Socrates* is known) but of all other, the disaffected soul is least inclinable ever to become *good-natur'd* towards God, wherein grace or holiness doth consist.

consist. Here 'tis most unperfwadeable, never facile to this change. One would have thought no affection should have been so natural, so deeply inwrought into the spirit of man, as an affection towards the Father of Spirits; but *here* he most of all discovers himself to be without *natural affection*: surely here is a sad proof, that such affection doth not ascend.

The whole duty of man, as *to the principle of it*, resolves into *love*. *That is the fulfilling of the Law*. As to its *object*; the two Tables divide it between God and our Neighbour. And accordingly divide that love. Upon those two Branches whereof; *love to God*, and *love to our neighbour*, hang all the Law and the Prophets.

The wickedness of the world hath kill'd this love at the very root, and indisposed the nature of man to all exercises of it, either way, whether towards God or his Neighbour. It hath not only rendred man unmeet for *holy communion with God*, but in a great measure for *civil society with one another*. It hath destroyed good nature; made men false, envious, barbarous; turn'd the world (especially the dark places of the earth, where the light of the Gospel shines not) into habitations of cruelty. But who sees not the enmity and disaffection of mens hearts towards God is the more deeply rooted, and less superable evil?

The beloved Apostle gives us a plain and sad intimation how the case is, as to this,
when

when he reasons thus; *He that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?*

He argues from the less to the greater; and this is the ground upon which his argument is built; *That the loving of God is a matter of greater difficulty, and from which the spirit of man is more remote, than loving of his neighbour.* And he withall insinuates an account why it is so; Gods remoteness from our sense, which is indeed a *cause*, but no *excuse*: It is a peccant faulty cause. For is our so gross sensuality no sin? that nothing should affect our hearts, but what we can see with our eyes? as if our *sense* were the only measure or judg of excellencies. We are not all flesh, what have we done with our Souls? if we cannot see God with our eyes, why do we not with our minds? at least so much of him we might, as to discern his excellency above all things else. How come our souls to lose their dominion, and to be so slavishly subject to a ruling sense? But the reason less concerns our present purpose; that whereof it is the reason; that implied assertion, *that men are in a less disposition to the love of God than their neighbours*, is the sad truth we are now considering. There are certain homiletical virtues that much adorn and polish the nature of man, Urbanity, Fidelity, Justice, Patience of Injuries, Compassion towards the Miserable, &c. and indeed without these, the world would break up, and all civil societies disband; if at least they

they did not in some degree obtain. But in the mean time men are at the greatest distance imaginable from any disposition to society with God. They have *some love* for one another; but *none* for him. And yet it must be remembred, that love to our neighbour, and all the consequent exertions of it, becoming duty by the Divine Law, ought to be performed as acts of obedience to God, and therefore ought to grow from the stock and root of a Divine Love; I mean, *love to God*. They are otherwise but Spurious Vertues, Bastard Fruits (*men gather not Grapes of Thorns, &c*). they grow from a Tree of another *kind*; and whatever semblance they may have of the true, they want their constituent form, their life and Soul. Though *love to the brethren* is made a character of the regenerate state, of *having past from death to life*; 'tis yet but a more *remote*, and is it self brought to trial by this *higher* and more *immediate one*, and which is more intimately connatural to the new creature, even the *Love of God*; *By this we know we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his Commandments*. A *respect to God* * specifies every Vertue and Duty. What-ever is loved and served, and not in him and for him (*servato ordine finis*, as the School-phrase is) becomes an Idol; and that love and service is Idolatry. And what a discovery is here of

1 Joh: 3.
14.

Chap. 5.2.

* Proinde
virtutes
quas sibi
videtur ha-
bere, nisi
ad Deum
revertentur,
etiam ipsa
vitia sunt
potius quam

virtutes. Aug. de Civit. Dei l. 19. c. 25.

disaffection

disaffection to God; that in the exercise of such (the above-mentioned) virtues, one single act shall be torn from it self, from its specifying moral form, only to leave out *him*. A promise shall be kept, but without any respect to God—(for even the promises made to *him* are broken without any scruple). That which is *another's* shall be rendred to him; but God shall not be regarded in the business. An alms given, *for the Lords sake* left out. That which concerns my neighbour *often done*, but what concerns God therein, as it were *studiously omitted*. This is what he that runs may read, That though the hearts of men are not to one another as they should, they are much more *averse* towards God.

Men are easier of acquaintance towards one another, they slide insensibly into each others bosoms; even the most churlish morose natures are wrought upon by assiduous repeated kindnesses (*gutta cavat lapidem, &c*). as often-falling drops at length wear and work into very stones: Towards God their hearts are more impenetrable than Rocks, harder than Adamants. He is seeking with some an acquaintance all their days: They live their whole age under the Gospel, and yet are never won. They hearken to one another, but are utterly unperfwadeable towards God; as the *deaf Adder that hears not the voice of the Charmer, though charming never so wisely*. The clearest Reason, the most powerful Arguments move them not; no
nor

Mat. 23. 37

See Psal.

81. 8, to 13.

Prov. 1. 20

to 24, & c.

Hof. 11. 4.

nor the most insinuating allurements, the sweetest breathings of love: *How often would I have gathered thee, as the Hen her Chickens under her Wings, and ye would not. God draws with the cords of a man, with the bands of love; but they still perversely keep at an unkind distance.*

Men use to believe one another (were there no credit given to each others words, and some mutual confidence in one another, there could be no human converse, all must affect solitude, and dwell in Dens and Deserts as wild beasts), but how incredulous are they of all Divine Revelations? though testified with never so convincing evidence! *Who hath believed our report!* The word of the Eternal God is regarded (O amazing wickedness) as we would the word of a Child or a Fool: No sober rational man, but his Narrations, Promises or Threatnings, are more reckon'd of.

Men are more reconcilable to one another when enemies, more constant when friends. How often doth the *power* of a conquering enemy, and the *distress* of the conquered, work a submission on this part, and a remission on that. How often are haughty spirits stoop, by a series of calamities, and made ductile; proud *arrogants* formed, by necessity and misery, into humble *supplicants*, so as to lye prostrate at the feet of a man that may help or hurt them; while still the same persons retain indomitable unyielding spirits towards God, under their most afflictive

five pressures. Though his gracious Nature and infinite fulness promise the most certain and liberal relief, 'tis the remotest thing from their thoughts to make any address to him. *They cry because of the oppression of the mighty, but none says where is God my Maker, who giveth songs in the night.* Rather perish under their burthens than look towards God, when his own visible hand is against them, or upon them, and their lives at his mercy; they stand it out to the last breath; and are more hardly humbled than consumed; sooner burn than weep; shrivel'd up into ashes sooner than melted into tears. *Scorched with great heat, yet repent not to give glory to God: Gnaw their tongues for pain, and yet still more disposed to blaspheme than pray or sue for mercy. Dreadful thought!* As to one another, Reconciliations among men are not impossible or unfrequent, even of mortal enemies; but they are utterly implacable towards God! yet they often wrong one another; but they cannot pretend God ever did them the least wrong, yea, they have liv'd by his bounty all their days. *They say to God, depart from us, yet he filleth their houses with good things.* So true is the Historians' * *Hatred is sharpest where most unjust.*

Job 35.

Rev. 16.

* Tacitus speaking of the hatred of Tiberius

and Augusta against Germanicus, the causers whereof, saith he, were acrioris, quia iniquæ.

Yea, when there seems at least to have been

been a reconciliation wrought, are treacheries, Covenant-breakings, revolts, strangeness, so frequent among men towards one another, as from them towards God? How inconsistent with friendship is it, according to common estimate, to be always promising, never performing; upon any or no occasion to break off intercourses, by unkind alienations, or mutual hostilities; to be morose, reserv'd each to other; to decline or disaffect each others converse; to shut out one another from their hearts and thoughts. But how common and unregretted are these carriages towards the blessed God? It were easie to expatiate on this Argument, and multiply instances of this greater disaffection. But in a word, what observing person may not see, what serious person would not grieve to see the barbarous sooner putting on civility; the riotous sobriety; the treacherous fidelity; the morose urbanity; the injurious equity; the churlish and covetous benignity and charity; than the ungodly man piety and sincere devotedness unto God? Here is the principal wound and distemper sin hath infected the nature of man with: Though he have suffered an universal impairment, he is chiefly prejudic'd, in regard of his habitude and tendency towards God; and what concerns the duties of the first Table. Here the breach is greatest, and here is the greatest need of repair. True it is; an inoffensive winning deportment towards men, is not without its excellency, and

and necessity too. And it doth indeed unsufferably reproach Christianity, and unbecome a Disciple of Christ; yea, it discovers a man not to be led by his Spirit, and so to be none of his; to indulge himself in immoral deportments towards men; to be undutiful towards superiors; unconvertible towards equals; oppressive towards inferiors; unjust towards any. Yet is an holy disposition of heart towards God, most earnestly, and in the first place to be endeavoured (which will then draw on the rest), as having in it highest equity and excellency, and being of the most immediate necessity to our blessedness.

Fifthly, Consider, *That there may be some gradual tendencies, or fainter essays towards godliness, that fall short of real godliness, or come not up to that thorough change and determination of heart God-ward, that is necessary to blessedness.* There may be a returning, *but not to the most high*, and wherein men may be (as the Prophet immediately subjoins) *like a deceitful Bow*, not fully bent, that will not reach the mark; they come not home to God. Many may be *almost perswaded*; and even within reach of Heaven, *not far from the Kingdom of God*; may seek to enter, and not be able; their hearts being *somewhat inclinable*, but *more averse*; for they can only be unable as they are unwilling. The Soul is in no possibility of taking up a complacent rest in God, till it be brought to this, to move toward him *spontaneously* and

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Hos. 7.16.

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with (as it were) a *self-motion*. And then is it *self-moved* towards God, when its preponderating bent is towards him. As a massie Stone that one attempts to displace, if it be heav'd at till it preponderate, it then moves out by its own weight; otherwise it reverts, and lies *where* and *as* it did before. So 'tis with many mens hearts, all our lifting at them, is but the rolling of the returning Stone; they are mov'd, but not remov'd: Sometimes they are lifted at in the publick Ministry of the Word; sometimes by a private seasonable admonition; sometimes God makes an affliction his Minister; a danger startles them; a sickness shakes them; and they think to change their course: but how soon do they change those thoughts, and are where they were? what enlightnings and convictions, what awakenings and terror, what remorse, what purposes, what tastes and relishes do some find in their own hearts, that yet are blasted and come to nothing? How many miserable abortions after travailing pangs and throws, and fair hopes of an happy birth of the new Creature? Often somewhat is produced that much resembles it, but is not it. No *gracious principle* but may have its counterfeit in an *ungracious heart*; whence they deceive not others only, but themselves, and think verily they are true converts while they are yet in their sins. How many wretched Souls, that lie dubiously struggling a long time under the contrary alternate impressions of the Gos-
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pel on the one hand, and the present evil World on the other; and give the 'day to their own sensual inclinations at last. In some degree, *escape the corruptions of the world, by the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, but are again intangled and overcome, so as their latter end is worse than their beginning.* Such a man is so far from being advantaged by his former faint inclinations towards God, that he would be found at last under this aggravated wickedness beyond all other men; that when others wanded from God through inadvertency and inconsideration, this man will be found to have been his enemy upon deliberation, and against the various strivings of his convinced heart to the contrary. This is more eminently victorious and reigning enmity; such a one takes great pains to perish. Alas! 'tis not a slight touch, an overly superficial tincture, some evanid sentiments of piety, a few good thoughts or wishes, that bespeak a *new man, a new creature.* 'Tis a *thorough prevailing change*, that quite alters the habitual posture of a mans Soul, and determines it towards God, so as that the after-course of his life may be capable of that denomination, *a living to God, a living after the Spirit;* That exalts the love of God into that Supremacy in him, that it becomes the *governing principle* of his life, and the *reason and measure* of his actions; that as he loves him above all things else, better than his own life, so he can truly (though possibly sometimes

2 Pet. 2.

1 Joh. 2. 5.
 1 Joh. 2. 6.
 2 Tim. 3. 5.
 Chap. 1. 7.

with a doubtful trembling heart) resolve the ordinary course of his daily walking and practice into that *love*, as the *directive principle* of it. *I pray, I read, I hear, because I love God.* I desire to be just, sober, charitable, meek, patient, *because I love God.* This is the perfection and end of the love of God, (therefore *that* must needs be the principle *hereof*) *obedience to his will.* Herein appears that *power of godliness*, denied (God knows) by too many that have the form: *The spirit of love, power, and of a sound mind.* That only is a sound mind, in which such love rules in such power. Is not love to God often pretended by such, that, when-ever it comes to an actual competition, discover they love their own flesh a great deal more; that seldom ever cross their own wills to do his; or hazard their own fleshly interest to promote his interest? we may justly say (as the Apostle, in a case fitly enough reducible hither), *how dwells the love of God in that man?* Notwithstanding such a subdued ineffectual love to God, such a one shall be denominated and dealt with as an enemy. 'Tis not likely any man on earth hates God so perfectly as those in Hell. And is not every quality, not yet perfect in its kind, and that is yet growing more and more intense, in the mean time allayed by some degree of its contrary? Yet that overmastered degree denominates not its subject, nor ought a man from such a supposed love to God to have the name of a *lover*

ver of him. That principle is only capable of denominating the man, that is prevalent and practical, that hath a governing influence on his heart and life. He in whom the love of God hath not such power and rule, whatever his fainter inclinations may be, is an *ungodly man*.

And now methinks these several Considerations compared and weighed together, should contribute something to the settling of right thoughts in the minds of secure sinners, touching the *nature* and *necessity* of this *heart-change*; and do surely leave no place for the forementioned vain pretences that occasioned them.

For (to give you a summary view of what hath been propounded in those foregoing Considerations), It now plainly appears, *That the holy Scripture requires in him that shall enjoy this blessedness, a mighty change of the very temper of his Soul, as that which must dispose him thereto; and which must therefore chiefly consist, in the right framing of his heart towards God; towards whom it is most fixedly averse, and therefore not easily susceptible of such a change. And that any slighter or more feeble inclination toward God, will not serve the turn; but such only whereby the Soul is prevalently and habitually turned to him.*

And then what can be more absurd or unsavoury? what more contrary to Christi-

an Doctrine, or common Reason, than instead of this necessary heart-change, to insist upon so poor a Plea, as that mentioned above, as the only ground of so great a hope? How empty and frivolous will it appear in comparison of this great Soul-transforming change, if we severally consider the particulars of it.

Joh. 17:17

As for *Orthodoxy* in *Doctrinals*, 'tis in it self an highly laudable thing; and in respect of the *Fundamentals* (for therefore are they so called) indispensably necessary to blessedness. As *that* cannot be without *holiness*, so nor *holiness* without *truth*. But (besides that this is that which every one pretends to) is every thing which is *necessary, sufficient*? As to *natural necessity* (which is that we now speak to) *Reason*, and *Intellectual nature* are also necessary; shall therefore all men, yea, and Devils too, be saved?

Besides, are you sure you believe the grand Articles of the Christian Religion? Consider a little,

The { Grounds } of that pretended Faith.
Effects }

First, Its Grounds: Every *assent* is as the grounds of it are. Deal *truly* here with thy Soul. Can you tell wherefore you are a Christian? what are thy inducements to be of this Religion? are they not such as
are

are common to thee with them that are of a false Religion? (I am here happily prevented by a worthy Author *, to which I recommend thee, but at the present a little be- think thy self), Is it not possible thou may'st be a Christian for the same reasons for which one may be a Jew, or a Mahometan, or a meer Pagan? as viz. Education, Custom, Law, Example, outward Advantage, &c. Now consider, if thou find this upon enquiry to be thy case, the Motives of thy being a Christian admit of being cast together into this form of reasoning.

*Mr. Pines
Trial of
sincere
love to
Christ.

That Religion which a mans Forefathers were of, which is established by Law, or generally obtains in the Country where he lives, The Profession whereof, most conduces to, or best consists with his credit, and other outward advantages, that Religion he is to imbrace as the true Religion. But such I find the Christian Religion to be to me: Therefore, &c.

The Proposition here is manifestly false; for it contains grounds common to all Religions, publickly owned, and profest throughout the world; and sure all cannot be true: And hence the Conclusion (though materially considered it be true, yet) formally considered, as a Conclusion issuing from such premises, must needs be false; and what then is become of thy Orthodoxy; when, as to the formal object of thy Faith, thou believest but as Mahometans and Pagans do? when thou art of this Faith, by Fate or

Chance only, not Choice or rational Inducement?

Rom. I. 16.
1 Thes. 2.
13.

Next, as to the Effects of thy Faith: Let them be enquired into also, and they will certainly bear proportion to the Grounds of it. The *Gospel* is the *power of God to salvation to every one that believes*; to them that believe it not, it signifies nothing. The Word of God received with a Divine Faith, as the Word of God, works effectually upon all that so receive it, *i. e.* all that believe. What such efficacious workings of it hast thou felt upon thy Soul? Certainly, its most *connatural* effect is *that very change of heart, and inclination God-ward*, of which we have been speaking. What is so suitable to the Gospel-Revelation, as a good temper of heart God-ward? And how absurd is it to introduce the cause on purpose to exclude its genuine inseparable effect? But evident it is, (though true Faith cannot), that *superficial irrational assent*, in which alone many glory, may too well consist with a disaffected heart towards God: and can it then signify any thing towards thy blessedness? sure to be so a Solifidian is to be a Nullifidian. Faith not working by Love is not Faith; at least profits nothing.

For thy outward conformity in the solemnities of worship, 'tis imputable to so corrupt motives and principles, that the thing it self, abstractively considered, can never be thought characteristical and distinguishing

ing of the heirs of blessedness. The worst of men, may perform the best of outward duties.

Thy *most glorious boasted vertues*, if they grow not from the proper root, *Love to God*, they are but splendid sins, as above appears, and hath been truly said of old.

Thy repentance is either true or false; if true, it is that very change of mind and heart I speak of, and is therefore eminently signaliz'd by that note, 'tis repentance [towards God]; if false, God will not be mocked.

For thy regeneration in Baptism; what Heb. 6. can it avail thee, *as to this blessedness*, if the present temper of thy heart be unsuitable thereto? Didst thou ever know any that held, that *all the baptized should be saved*? Will thy Infant-sanctity excuse the enmity and disaffection to God of thy riper age?

In short, if we seclude this work of God upon the Soul; how inconsiderable is the difference between the Christian and the Heathen World? wherein can it then be understood to lie, but in some ineffectual Notions, and external Observances? And can it be thought that the righteous holy God will make so vast a difference in the states of men *hereafter*, who differ so little *here*? or that it shall so highly recommend a man to God, that it was his lot to be born, and to have liv'd upon such a Turf or Soil, or in such a clime or part of the World?

Rom. 6. 17.

Matt. 19.

Joh. 6.

World? His gracious Providence is thankfully to be acknowledg'd and ador'd, that hath assigned us our Stations under the Gospel; but then it must be remembred, the Gospel hath the goodness, not of the *end*, but of the *means*; which, as by our improvement or non-improvement, it becomes effectual or ineffectual, doth acquit from, or aggravate condemnation; and that it works not as a Charm or Spell, we know not how, or why, or when we think not of it; but by recommending it self in the demonstration and power of the Holy Ghost, to our Reason and Consciences, to our Wills and Affections, till we be delivered up into the Mold or Form of it. Surely were it so slight a matter, as too many fondly dream, that must distinguish between them that shall be saved and shall perish, there would need no *striving to enter in at the strait gate*; and the Disciples question would never have been, *who then shall be saved?* but rather, *who shall not be saved?* nor would it have been resolved by our Saviour into the immediate power of him alone, *to whom all things are possible*, that any are saved at all; nor have been so earnestly asserted by him, that *none could come to him, but whom his Father draws*.

The obvious import of which passages is such, that if careless sinners could once obtain of themselves seriously to consider them, methinks they should find little rest in their spirits, till they might discern a
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work wrought there, in some degree *worthy of God*, an impression some way proportionable to the power of an Almighty Arm; and that might speak God its Author. For notwithstanding the Soul's natural capacities before asserted and inferred, its ^{*} Moral incapacity, I mean its wicked aversation from God, is such as none but God himself can overcome.

* That moral incapacity is also in some sense truly natural,

that is, in the same sense wherein we are said to be by nature the *children of wrath*, Eph. 2. 3. Therefore human nature must be considered as *created by God*, and as *propagated by man*. In the former sense, as God is the Author of it, 'tis taken in this distinction, of *moral and natural impotency*, which needs not further explication; yet you may take this account of it from Dr. Twisse, *Impotentia faciendi quod Deo gratum est & acceptum, non est impotentia naturæ, sed morum. Nulla etenim nobis deest facultas naturæ per peccatum originale, juxta illud Augustini; Nulli agnoscendæ veritatis abstulit facultatem. Adhuc remanet potentia, quâ facere possumus quæcunque volumus. Vind. l. 3. errat. 9. sect. 6. Naturalem potentiam, quidlibet agendi pro arbitrio ipsorum, dicimus ad omnes transmitti, non autem potentiam moralem. Vindic. Criminat. 3. S. 1. digr. 2. Chap. 3.*

Nor is that aversation the less culpable, for that it is so hardly overcome, but the more. 'Tis an aversation of *will*; and who sees not, that every man is more *wicked*, according as his *will* is more wickedly bent? Hence his impotency or inability to turn to God, is not such as *that he cannot turn if he would*; but it consists in this, *that he is not willing*. He affects a distance from God.

Which

Which shews therefore the necessity still of this change. For the *possibility* of it, and the Encouragement (according to the Methods wherein God is wont to dispense his Grace) the Sinner hath to hope and endeavour it, will more fitly fall into consideration elsewhere.

CHAP.

C H A P. XIII.

Fourth Inference. *That the Soul in which such a change is wrought, restlessly pursues this Blessedness till it be attain'd.*

Fifth Inference. *That the knowing of God, and conformity to him, are satisfying things, and do now in a degree satisfy, according to the measure wherein they are attained.*

Sixth Inference. *That the love of God towards his people is great, that hath designed for them so great, and even a satisfying good.*

4.th **T**IS further to be inferr'd, *That a Soul wherein such a change is wrought, pursues this blessedness with restless supreme desire, till it attain to the fulness thereof. We have here a plainly implied description of the posture and tendency of such a Soul (even of a sanctified holy Soul, which had therefore undergone this blessed change) towards this state of blessedness. I shall (saith he) be satisfied with thy likeness, q. d. I cannot be satisfied otherwise. We have seen how great a change is necessary to dispose the*

4. Infer.

the Soul to this blessedness, which being once wrought, nothing else can now satisfy it. Such a thing is this blessedness, (I speak now of so much of it as is previous and conducing to satisfaction, or of blessedness materially considered, the Divine glory to be beheld and participated): 'Tis of that nature, it makes the Soul restless, it lets it not be quiet, after it hath got some apprehension of it, till it attain the full enjoyment. The whole life of such a one, is a continual *seeking Gods face*. So attractive is this glory of a subject rightly disposed to it. While others crave *Corn and Wine*, this is the sum of the holy Soul's desires, *Lord lift thou up the light of thy countenance, &c.* The same thing is the object of its *present desires* that shall be of its *eternal satisfaction and enjoyments*. This is now its *one thing*, the request insisted on, *to behold the beauty of the Lord, &c.* and while in any measure it doth so, yet 'tis still looking for this blessed hope, still hoping to be like him, see him as he is. The expectation of satisfaction in this state, implies the restless working of desire till then; for what is this *satisfaction*, but the fulfilling of our *desires*, the perfecting of the Souls *motions* in a complacential *rest*. *Motion* and *rest* do exactly correspond each to other. Nothing can *naturally* rest in any place, to which it was not before *naturally* inclin'd to move. And the *rest* is proportionably more compos'd and steady, according as the *motion* was stronger and more vigorous. By

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Psal. 4.

Psal. 27.

how much the heavier any body is, so much the stronger and less resistable is its motion downward; and then accordingly it is less movable when it hath attained its resting place. 'Tis therefore a vanity and contradiction, to speak of the Souls being *satisfied* in that which it was not before *desirous* of *. And that state which it shall ultimately and eternally *acquiesce* in (with a *rest* that must therefore be understood to be most composed and sedate), towards it must it needs *move* with the strongest and most unsatisfied *desire*; a *desire* that is supreme,

* Aptitudinally (I mean) and *Ex hypothesis*, i. e. supposing the knowledge of the God doth impossible it

object: Otherwise as to actual explicite desires, give us beyond what we can ask or think. But 'tis the Soul should rest satisfied in that, which upon knowledge it is undesirous of, and doth or would reject.

prevalent, and triumphant over all other desires, and over all obstructions to it self; least capable of diversion, or of pitching upon any thing short of the term aimed at. Ask therefore the holy Soul, *What is thy Supreme desire?* and so far as it understands it self, it must answer, *To see and partake the divine glory; to behold the blessed face of God, till his likeness be transfused through all my powers, and his entire image be perfectly formed in me: Present to my view what else you will, I can be satisfied in nothing else but this.*

Therefore this leaves a black note upon those wretched Souls that are wholly strangers to such desires; that would be better satisfied to dwell always in dust; that shun the

the blessed face of God as hell it self; and to whom the most despicable vanity is a more desirable sight than that of divine glory. Miserable Souls! Consider your state, can that be your blessedness which you desire not? or do you think God will receive any into his blessed presence, to whom it shall be a burden? Methinks, upon the reading of this you should presently doom your selves, and see your sentence written in your breasts. Compare your hearts with this holy mans; see if there be any thing like this in the temper of your spirits; and never think well of your selves till you find it so.

5. *Infer.* 5. *The knowledge of God, and conformity to him, are in their own nature apt to satisfy the desires of the Soul, and even now actually do so, in the measure wherein they are attained.* Some things are not of a *satisfying nature*; there is nothing tending to satisfaction in them. And then the continual heaping together of such things, doth no more towards satisfaction, than the accumulating of Mathematical Points would towards the compacting of a solid Body; or the multiplication of Cyphers only, to the making of a Sum. But *what shall one day satisfy*, hath in itself a power and aptitude thereto. The *act* (whenever it is) supposes the power. Therefore the hungry-craving Soul, that would fain be *happy*, but knows not how, needs not spend its days in making uncertain guesses, and fruitless attempts and trials: It may fix its

its hovering thoughts; and upon assurance here given, say, I have now found at last where satisfaction may be had; and have only this to do, to bend all my powers hither, and intend this one thing, the possessing my self of this blessed rest; *earnestly* to endeavour, and *patiently* to wait for it.

Happy discovery! welcom tidings! I now know which way to turn my eye, and direct my pursuit. I shall no longer spend my self in dubious toilsom wandrings, in anxious vain enquiry. I have found! I have found! blessedness is here. If I can but get a lively efficacious sight of God, I have enough—*Shew me the Father, and it sufficeth.*

Let the weary wandring Soul bethink it self, and retire to God; He will not mock thee with shadows, as the World hath done. *This is eternal life, to know him the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent.* Apart from Christ thou canst not know nor see him with fruit and comfort; but the Gospel-Revelation (which is the Revelation of God in Christ) gives thee a lovely prospect of him. His glory shines in the face of Jesus Christ; and when by beholding it thou art changed into the same likeness, and findest thy self gradually changing more and more from glory to glory, thou wilt find thy self accordingly in a gradual tendency towards satisfaction and blessedness: That is, do but seriously set thy self to study and contemplate the *Being and Attributes* of God; and then look upon him as through the Mediator,

he is willing to be reconcil'd to thee, and become thy God; and so long let thine eye fix and dwell here, till it affect thy heart, and the proper impress of the Gospel be by the Spirit of the Lord instamp'd upon it; till thou find thy self wrought to a compli-
ance with his holy will, and his image form-
ed in thee; and thou shalt soon experience
thou art entring into his rest; and wilt re-
lish a more satisfying pleasure in this blessed
change, than all thy worldly sensual enjoy-
ments did ever afford thee before.

Surely, if the perfect vision and percepti-
on of his glorious likeness will yield a com-
pleat satisfaction at last, the initial and pro-
gressive tendencies towards the *former*, will
proportionably infer the *latter*.

'Tis obvious hence to collect, who are in
this world (ordinarily and, *ceteris paribus*,
where more unusual violent temptations hin-
der not) the most *satisfied* and *contented* per-
sons; even those that have most of the cla-
rifying sights of God, and that thence par-
take most of his Image (indeed Scripture
only vouchsafes the name to such sights of
God, *he that doth evil hath not seen God*).
Such as have most of a godly frame wrought
into *their spirits*, and that have hearts most
attempered and conformed to God, These
are the most contented persons in the world.
Content is part of the gain that attends god-
liness; it concurring, renders the other a
great gain; [*—godliness with contentment*];
the form of expression discovers how con-
natural

1 Joh. 3.6.
3 Joh. 11.

1 Tim. 6.6.

natural *contentment* is to *godliness*; as if they were not to be mentioned apart. *Godliness*, as if he had said, is a very gainful thing, but if you would comprehend the gainfulness of it fully, do not abstract too curiously, take in with it that which is of so near an alliance, that you will hardly know how to consider them apart; let its inseparable adjunct, *contentment*, go along with it, and you will find it a gainful thing indeed.

The true *knowledg* of God so directly tends to *holiness*, and that to *contentation*, that it may be too evidently concluded, that a discontented person hath little of the one or the other, not much knowledg, and less grace; he is so far from being like God, that in the Apostles language above we may say, *he hath not seen him*. Doth that person know God, or hath ever seen him, that falls not into the dust, admiring so glorious a Majesty? that subjects not himself to him, with Loyal affections, accounting it his only grand concernment to please and serve him? But the discontented person takes upon him, as if he were God alone, and as if he expected every creature to do him homage, and thought the creation were made for the pleasure and service of none but him. Hath that person ever seen God, that acknowledges him not a sufficient portion, a full, all-comprehending good? Hath he seen him, that sees not reason to trust him; to commit all his concernments to him? Hath he seen him that loves him not, and delights not

in his love? Hath he seen him that quits not all for him, and abandons not every private interest to espouse 'his; and how evidently do these things tend to quiet and compose the Soul! "Discontent proceeds from idolizing thoughts of our selves; 'tis rooted in self-conceit, in self-dependence, self-love, self-seeking, all which despicable Idols (or that one great Idol, *Self*, thus variously served and Idolized) one *sight* of the Divine Glory would confound and bring to nothing. The sights of God melt the heart, break it under a sense of sin, and hence compose it to a meek, peaceful humility; but the discontented spirit is an unbroken, proud, imperious spirit. The sights of God purifie the Soul, refine it from the dross of this vile world, make it daily aspire to a conformity unto the pure and spiritual nature of God. But a discontented spirit, is a sensual terrene spirit (for what, but such objects are the usual matter of most mens discontents)? taking sensuality in its just latitude, 'tis a low dunghil spirit, fit for nothing but to rake and scrabble in the dirt.

I insist upon this, apprehending (what deserves more lamentations than it hath observation), that too many annex a profession of eminent godliness and spirituality, to an indulged, querulous, impatient temper of spirit; join a splendid appearance of piety, to an unreformed perverse frowardness (which agree as well as a Jewel of Gold to a Swines snout), nothing pleases them, their mercies
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are not worth the acknowledgment; their afflictions intolerable, not to be born. They fall out and quarrel with all occurrences, actions, events; neither Man, nor God, doth any thing good in their sight. The world is not well govern'd; nothing falls out well as to themselves. What can possibly be thought on more repugnant to the knowledg of God, the grand design of all Religion, and the very Spirit of the Gospel, than this temper? Which way do these tend and aim, but to lead Souls to blessedness; to bring them into a peaceful, happy, satisfied state and frame? and must we, because that end cannot be attained *here*, therefore go the quite contrary way? or pretend we are going to heaven with our backs turned upon it? Sure the discoveries God now makes of himself to us, and by which he impresses his likeness upon his own (though they ultimately design our satisfaction and blessedness in heaven, as intermediate thereunto); they aim at the bringing us into an Heaven upon Earth; to form us unto a life agreeable, and that hath analogy with that of Heaven; unto which nothing is more analogous in our present state, than that peace and serenity which result from divine knowledg and holiness; nothing more inconsistent, than a peevish, fretful, turbulent Spirit. The *one* is a participation of a bright and mild light from Heaven; the *other*, of a dark and raging fire from Hell? 'Tis only Gods face, his glorious likeness reflected on our Souls,

Psal. 34. 5.

that shall satisfy hereafter, and make Heaven. He doth not now wholly conceal himself from us, nor altogether hide his face. The shining of the same face (in what degree he now vouchsafes it) will make this Earth an Heaven too. One glance towards him may transmit a lively pleasant lustre upon our spirits, (*they looked on him, and were lightened*). And we live in the expectation of clearer and more impressive eternal visions. It will become us to express a present satisfaction, proportionable to our present sights and expectations; and to endeavour daily to see more, and to be more like God; that we may be daily more and more satisfied; while we cannot yet attain to be making gradual approaches towards that blessed state. By how much any have more of the vision and likeness of God in their present state, so much they approach nearer unto satisfaction.

6. Infer.

6. We infer; *The love of God to his people is great, which hath designed for them so great, and even a satisfying good.* We cannot overlook the occasion this Doctrine gives us, to consider and contemplate a-while the love of God. If this shall be the blessedness of his Saints, 'tis a great love that shall be the Spring and Source of it.

Two things here before our eyes, discover the greatness of his love: That it designs satisfaction to the persons meant; and that

that they shall be satisfied with the *divine vision and likeness*.

1. *It designs their satisfaction.* This is as far as love can go. 'Tis love to the uttermost: It doth not satisfy it self, till it satisfy them. 'Tis love to spare an enemy, to relieve a stranger; but to satisfy for ever them that were both; this sure exceeds all the wonted measures of love. Much love is shewn in the forgiveness of sin, in the supply of necessities; but herein (as the Apostle speaks in another case) is the love of God perfected (as to its exercise): it hath now perfectly attained its end, when it hath not left so much as a craving desire, not a wish unsatisfied; the Soul cannot say, *I wish it were better; O that I had but this one thing more to compleat my happiness*. It hath neither pretence nor inclination to think such a thought. Divine Love is now at rest. It was travelling (big with gracious designs) before; it hath now delivered it self. It would rather create new heavens every moment, than not satisfy: But it hath now done it to the full; the utmost capacity of the Soul is filled up; it can be no happier than it is. This is loves triumph over all the miseries, wants, and desires of a languishing Soul. The appropriate, peculiar glory of Divine love. If all the excellencies of the whole Creation besides, were contracted into one glorious Creature, it would never be capable of this boast, *I have satisfied one Soul*. The love of God leaves none unsatisfied

tified, but the proud despisers of it. Now is the eternal Sabbath of Love. Now it enters into rest, having finish'd all its works; it views them over now with delight, for lo they are all good; its works of Pardon, of Justification and Adoption; its works of Regeneration, of Conversion, and Sanctification; Its establishing, quickning, comforting works; they are all good, good in themselves, and in this their end, the *satisfaction and repose of blessed Souls*. Now Divine Love puts on the Crown, ascends the Throne, and the many Myriads of glorified Spirits fall down about it, and adore: All profess to owe to it the satisfying pleasures they all enjoy. Who can consider the unspeakable satisfaction of those blessed Spirits, and not also reflect upon this exalted greatness of Divine Love!

2. 'Tis again great Love, if we consider *wherewith they shall be satisfied*. The sight and participation of the Divine Glory, his face, his likeness, his represented and impressed glory. There may be great love that never undertakes, nor studies to satisfy all the desires of the persons we cast our love upon, especially where nothing will satisfy but high and great matters. The love of God knows no difficulties; nor can be overfet. The greater the performance or vouchsafement, the more suitable to Divine Love. It hath resolved to give the Soul a plenary satisfaction, perfectly to content all its desires; and since nothing else can do it, but
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an eternal beholding of the glorious face of the Divine Majesty, and a transformation into his own likeness, that shall not be withheld. Yea, it hath created, refined, enlarged its capacity on purpose, that it might be satisfied with nothing less. Great love may sometimes be signified by a glance; the offered view of a willing face. Thus our Lord Jesus invites his Church to discover her own love, and answer his, *Let me see thy face, &c.* *Cant.* 2. 14. Love is not more becomingly exprest or gratified, than by mutual looks, [*ubi amor, ibi oculus*]. How great is that love that purposely lays aside the vail, that never turns away its own, nor permits the aversion of the beholders eye throughout eternity. Now we see in a glass; then *face to face*, as if never weary of beholding on either part; but on that part the condescension lies, is the transcendent admirable love. *That* a generous beneficent, the *other* (till it be satisfied here) a craving indigent love. And how inexpressible a condescension is this? Poor wretches! many of whom, possibly, were once so low, that a strutting Grandee would have thought himself affronted by their look, and have met with threatening rebukes by their over-daring venturous eye; lo now they are permitted (to stand before Princes; that's a mean thing) to feed their eyes with Divine glory, to view the face of God. He sets them before his face for ever.

And that eternal vision begets in them
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an *eternal likeness*; they behold and partake glory at once, that their joy may be full. They behold not a glorious God with deformed Souls; that would render them a perpetual abomination and torment to themselves. Love cannot permit that Heaven should be their affliction; that they should have cause to loath and be weary of themselves in that presence. It satisfies them, by cloathing and filling them with glory; by making them partake of the Divine likeness, as well as behold it. 'Tis reckon'd a great expression of a complying love, but to give a Picture; when the parties loved only permit themselves to view in a mute representation a vicarious face. This is much more a vital Image (as before) Gods own living-likeness propagated in the Soul; the inchoation of it is called the *Divine Love*, the *Seed of God*. What amazing love is this, of the great God to a worm? not to give over till he have assimilated it to his own glory; till it appear as a ray of Light begotten of the Father of Lights! *Every one*, saith the Apostle, *that doth righteousness is born of him*; and then it follows, *Behold, what manner of love—to be the sons of God; to be like him, to see him as he is, &c.* How great a word is that (spoken in reference to our present state) — *to make us partakers of [his] holiness*. And (as well it might) 'tis instanc'd as an effect and argument of love, (for sure chastening it self, abstracted from that end of it, doth not import love)

Whom

1 Joh. 2.
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Chap. 3.1.

Heb. 12.

Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth,—and then by and by, in the same series and line of discourse is added,—*to make us partakers of his holiness.* Love always either supposes similitude, or intends it; and is sufficiently argued by it either way. And sure, the love of God cannot be more directly expressed, than in his first intending to make a poor Soul like him, while he loves it with compassion; and then imprinting and perfecting that likeness, that he may love it with eternal delight. Love is here the *first* and the *last*, the *beginning* and *end* in all this business.

C H A P. XIV.

Seventh Inference. *That since this blessedness is limited to a qualified subject [I in righteousness], the unrighteous are necessarily left excluded.*

Eighth Inference. *That righteousness is no vain thing, in as much as it hath so happy an issue, and ends so well.*

7. *Infer.* 7. **C**onsidering this blessedness is not common but limited to a qualified subject [I in righteousness], a person cloath'd in righteousness: It evidently follows, *The unrighteous are necessarily excluded and shut out, can have no part nor portion in this blessedness.* The same thing that the Apostle tells us, *without an inference; Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the Kingdom of God, &c.* intimating that to be a most confessed known thing: *Know ye not? it is possible ye can be ignorant of this?*

[1 Cor. 6.

The *natural necessity* of what hath been here infer'd, hath been argued already from the consideration of the *nature of this blessedness*. The *legal necessity* of it, arising from the

the Divine Will and Law, is that I mainly intend at present. By *such* a necessity also, they are excluded, who by Gods Rule (according to which the supreme Judgment must be managed) shall be found unrighteous: Those that come not up to the terms of the Gospel-Covenant; never accepted the offers, nor submitted to the commands of it; and that hence consequently are unrelated to Christ, and ununited to him; no way capable of advantage by his most perfect and all-sufficient righteousness, that alone fully answers all the exactions and demands of the Covenant of Works: And so, who are at last found unrighteous by the Old Law and the New; the Law both of the Creator and Redeemer too.

There is the same necessity these should be excluded, as that God should be just and true. The word is gone forth of his mouth in righteousness, and cannot return. He did not dally with sinners, when he settled those Constitutions, whence this necessity results. *He is not a man, that he should lie; nor the Son of man, that he should repent.* An Heathen understood so much of the nature of God.

I have thought sometimes, with much wonder, of the stupid folly of un sanctified hearts; they are even confounded in their own wishes; and would have (in order to their security) they know not what. Were the question faithfully put to the very heart of such an one, What wouldst thou have done

done in order to thy eternal safety from divine wrath and vengeance? would not the answer be, O that God would recall those severe Constitutions he hath made; and not insist so strictly on what he hath required in the Gospel, in order to the salvation of sinners. But foolish wretch! dost thou know what thou say'st! wouldst thou have God repeal the Gospel, that thou may'st be the more secure? in what a case art thou then? Hast thou no hope if the Gospel stand in force? what hope wilt thou have if it do not? Must the hopes of all the World be ruin'd to establish thine? and yet leave them involv'd in the common ruin too? What, but the Gospel gives the least hope to Apostate sinners? There is now hope for thee in the Gospel-Promise, if thou return to God.

Isa. 55:

Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him turn to the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, and he will abundantly pardon.

But take away the Gospel, and where art thou? Were it possible for thee to repent, and become a new man; what settles the connexion between Repentance and Salvation, but the Gospel-Promise? Will the violated Law of Works accept thy Repentance instead of Obedience? Doth it not expressly preclude any such expectation? Doth it give any ground to look for any thing but death after sin? Thou must therefore fly to the Gospel, or yield thy self lost: And know, it contains none but *faithful and true sayings,*

ings, that have more stability in them than the foundations of heaven and earth: Therefore expect nothing to be altered for thy sake. The Gospel-Constitution was settled long before thou wast born: Thou com'st too late with thy Exceptions (if thou hadst any) against it. Remember therefore this is one of the unalterable determinations of this Gospel, *without holiness thou shalt never see God*, or (which amounts to the same) *thou canst not behold his face but in righteousness*. There is no word in all the Bible of more certain truth than this. In this also how apt are sinners foolishly to intangle themselves! The Gospel is true, and to be believed, till they meet with something that crosses them, and goes against the hair, and then they hope it is not so. But vain man! If once thou shake the truth of God, what wilt thou stay thy self upon? Is God true when he promises? and is he not as true when he threatens? If that be a true saying, *Say to the righteous, it shall be well with him*,—is not that as much to be regarded, *Wo to the wicked, it shall be ill with him*? *The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him*. Are not these of equal authority? If thou hadst any reason to *hope* thou mayest be happy though thou never be righteous; is there not as much reason to *fear* thou might'st be miserable though thou be; since the one is as much against the flat express word of God as the other? Let not thy
love

love to sin betray thee out of all Religion and thy Wits together. Wherein wilt thou believe one upon the bare value of his word; that will lie to thee in any thing? Yea, and as it is the same authority that is affronted in every command, whence disobedience to one is a breach of all; so is the same veracity denied in every truth, and the disbelief of one belies all; and wilt thou believe him in any thing, thou hast proclaimed a liar in every thing? Therefore, so little hast thou gained by disbelieving the Divine Revelation in this thing, that thou hast brought thy self to this miserable *Dilemma*; If the word of God be false, thou hast no foundation of any Faith left thee; if it be true, it dooms thee to eternal banishment from his blessed face, while thou remainest in thy unrighteousness. It will not be thy advantage then to disbelieve this Gospel-Record, but to consider it, and take it to heart; 'twill prove never the less true at last, for that thou wilt not believe it, *shall thy unbelief make the truth of God of none effect?* And if thou wouldst but reasonably consider the case, methinks thou shouldst soon be convinc'd. Since thou acknowledgest (as I suppose thee to do), that there are two states of men in the other World, *a state of blessedness, and a state of misery*; and two sorts of men in this World, the *righteous, and the unrighteous*: Let thy reason and conscience now judg, who shall be allotted to the one state, and who to the other. Sure, if thou

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acknowledg a righteous Judg of all the World, thou canst not think he will turn men promiscuously into Heaven or Hell at random, without distinction: Much less canst thou be so absurd and mad, as to think all the unrighteous shall be saved, and the righteous perish: And then what is left thee to judg, but that which I am now urging upon thee, That when the righteous shall be admitted to the vision of Gods blessed face, the unrighteous shall be driven forth into outer darkness.

It may be some here will be ready to say, But to what purpose is all this, they were of the same mind before, and cannot think that any one would ever say the contrary.

Nor do I think so either; but 'tis one thing not to believe a conclusion to be true, and another to profess a contrary belief: And one thing to believe a conclusion, another to think we believe it. Men often know not their own minds. In practical matters, 'tis best seen what a mans belief is by his practice: For when any profess to believe this or that practical truth, relating to their salvation, if they believe it not practically, *i.e.* with such a belief as will command their futable practice, it matters not what belief they are of, or whether they were of that judgment or no: Yea, it will prove in the issue better for them they had been of another, when their own professed belief shall be urged against them. But let us con-

sider a little, how in practical matters of less concernment we would estimate a mans belief: You meet a Traveller upon the way, who tells you, the Bridg over such an unpassable River is broken down, and that if you venture you perish; if you believe him, you return; if you hold on, he reasonably concludes you believe him not; and will therefore be apt to say to you, if you will not believe me you may make tryal: Your Physitian tells you a disease is growing upon you, that in a short time will prove incurable and mortal, but if you presently use the means he shall prescribe, 'tis capable of an easie remedy: How would you your self have your belief of your Physitian judged of in this case? would you expect to be believed, if you should say, you do not at all distrust your Physitians integrity and judgment, but yet you resolve not to follow his directions? unless you would have us believe too, that you are weary of your life, and would fain be rid of it. There is no Riddle or Mystery in this. How ridiculous would men make themselves, if in matters of common concernment they should daily practice directly contrary to their professed belief? How few would believe them serious, or in their wits? But however, call this believing, or what you will, we contend not about the name; the belief of such a thing can no further do you good, you can be nothing the better for it, further than as it engages you to take a course

course futable and consequent to such a belief. To believe that there is a Hell, and run into it; that unrighteousness persisted in will damn you, and yet live in it. To what purpose is it, to make your boasts of this Faith?

But since you are willing to call this believing; all the foregoing reasoning is to engage you to *consider what you believe*. Do you believe that *unrighteousness will be the death of your soul; will eternally separate you from God, and the presence of his glory?* and when you have reason'd the matter with your self, you find it to be *certainly so: Should not such a thing be more deeply pondered?* The bare proposal of an evident truth commands present assent; but if I further bend my mind to reason out the same thing to my self, I am occasioned to take notice of the grounds, dependencies, the habitudes of it, what it rests upon, and whither it tends, and thence more discern its importance, and of what moment it is, than I should have done, if upon first view I had assented only, and dismiss'd it my thoughts. And yet is it possible, you should think this to be *true*, and not think it a most *important truth*? Is it a small matter in your account, whether you shall be blessed or miserable for ever? whether you be saved or perish eternally? Or is it considered by you, according as the weight of the matter requires, that as you are found righteous or unrighteous, so will it everlastingly fare with you?

You may possibly say, you already conclude your self righteous, therefore no further employ your thoughts about it.

But methinks, you should hardly be able however to put such a thing out of your thoughts; while as yet the final determination is not given in the case. If a man have a question yet depending, concerning his life or estate; though his business be never so clear, he will hardly forget it, the trial not being yet past. And though in this matter, you have no reason to suspect error or corruption in your Judge, (through which many honest causes may miscarry in an human Judicature) yet have you no reason to suspect your self? If the holy Spirit hath *assured you*, it hath not *stupidified you*; but as you have then the less of *fear*, you have the more of *love* and *joy*. Therefore you will not thence mind such a concernment the *less*, but with the *more delight*; and therefore also, most probably, with the more frequency and intension. What a pleasure will it be to review evidences, and say, lo here are the *Mediums* by which I make out my Title to the Eternal Inheritance. Such and such Characters give me the confidence to number my self among Gods righteous ones. And do you lead that heavenly raised life? do you live in those sweet and ravishing comforts of the Holy Ghost, that may bespeak you one whom he hath sealed up to the day of redemption?

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If you pretend not to any such certainty, but rely upon your own judgment of your case; are you sure you are neither mistaken in the notion of the righteousness required, nor in the application of it to your own Soul?

Possibly, you may think your self, because in your ordinary dealing you wrong no man (your self being judg), a very righteous person. But evident it is, when the Scripture uses this term as descriptive of Gods own people, and to distinguish between them that shall be saved and perish, it takes it in that comprehensive sense before-explained. And however, it requires at least much more of thee, under other expressions, as thou canst hardly be so ignorant but to know. And do but use thy reason here a little, and demand of thy self: Is he to be accounted a righteous person, that thinks it fit to avoid wronging a man, but makes no conscience at all of wronging God? More particularly: Is it righteous, to live all thy days in a willing ignorance of the Author of thy being, never once to enquire, *Where is God my Maker?* Is it righteous to forget him days without number, not to have him from day to day in all thy thoughts? Is it righteous to estrange thy self from him, and live as without him in the world, while thou liv'st, mov'st, and hast thy being in him? not to glorifie him in whose hands thy breath is? to be a lover of pleasure more than God? a worshipper, in thy very

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Soul,

Job. 35.

Soul, of the creature more than the Creator? Is it righteous to harden thy heart against his fear and love? to live under his power, and never reverence it; his goodness, and never acknowledg it? to affront his Authority, to belie his Truth, abuse his Mercy, impose upon his Patience, defie his Justice; to exalt thy own interest against his; the trifling petite interest of a silly worm, against the great all-comprehending interest of the common Lord of all the world? to cross his will, to do thy own? to please thy self, to the displeasing of him? whence hadst thou thy measures of Justice, if this be just?

Again, Is it righteous to deny the Lord that bought thee, to neglect that great salvation which he is the author of? And whereas he came to bless thee in turning thee from thine iniquities, wilfully to remain still in an accursed servitude to sin? *when he was made manifest to destroy the works of the Devil,* still to yield thy self a captive at his will? whereas he died that thou might'st not any longer live to thy self, but to him that died for thee, and rose again; and that he might redeem thee from thy vain conversation, and that thou art so expressly told, that such as still lead sensual lives, mind earthly things, have not their conversation in heaven, are enemies to the Cross of Christ. Is it no unrighteousness, that in these respects thy whole life should be nothing else but a constant contradiction to the very design of his dying?

ing? a perpetual Hostility, a very Tilting at his Cross? Is there no unrighteousness in thy obstinate infidelity, that wickedly denies belief to his glorious Truths, acceptance of his gracious Offers, subjection to his holy Laws? No unrighteousness in thy obstinate, remorseless impenitency? thy heart that cannot repent? that melts not, while a crucified Jesus, amidst his agonies and dying pangs, cries to thee from the Cross, *O sinner, enough, thy hard heart breaks mine! yield at last, and turn to God.* Is it righteous, to live as no way under Law to Christ? to persist in actual rebellion against his just Government, which he died, and revived, and rose again, to establish over the living and the dead? yea, and that while thou pretendest thy self a Christian? In a word: Is it righteous to tread under foot the Son of God, to vilifie his Blood, and despise his Spirit; Is this the righteousness that thou talkest of? Are these thy qualifications for the everlasting blessedness?

If thou say, thou confessest thou art *in thy self*, in these several respects, altogether unrighteous; but thou hopest the righteousness of Christ will be sufficient to answer for all.

No doubt, Christs righteousness is abundantly available to all the ends for which it was intended by the Father and Him; but it shall never answer all the ends that a foolish wicked heart will fondly imagine to it self.

In short, It serves to excuse thy non-performance of, and stands instead of thy perfect sinless obedience to the *Law of works*; but it serves not instead of thy performance of what is required of thee, as the *Condition of the Gospel-Covenant*. That is, It shall never supply the room of Faith, Repentance, Regeneration, Holiness, the loving of Christ above all, and God in him; so as to render these unnecessary, or salvation possible without them. There is not one *Iota*, or tittle in the Bible, that so much as intimates an unregenerate person, an unbeliever, an impenitent or unholy person, shall be saved by Christs righteousness; but enough to the contrary, every one knows, that hath the least acquaintance with the Scriptures.

Vain man! what, is Christ divided and divided against himself; Christ without against Christ within? His sufferings on the Cross, and foregoing obedience against his Spirit and Government in the Soul? Did Christ die to take away the necessity of our being Christians? And must his death serve, not to destroy sin out of the world, but Christianity? Who hath taught thee so wickedly to misunderstand the design of Christs dying? And when the Scripture so plainly tells thee, *That God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. And that he became the Author of eternal salvation to them that obey him;* yea,

Joh. 3. 16.

Heb. 5. 9.

yea, and that he will come in flaming fire to take vengeance on them that know and obey him not. What should induce thee to think thou may'st be saved by him, whether thou believest and obeyest or not?

No, if ever thou think to see God, and be happy in him, thou must have a righteousness in thee resembling *his*; the very product, the thing wrought in the work of regeneration. *If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that every one that doth righteousness is born of him.* Whereupon follows the description of the blessedness of such righteous ones, in the beginning of the next Chapter,—*They are sons--they shall be like, &c.* So that in a word, without some sight of God here, there's no seeing him hereafter; without some likeness to him now, none hereafter. And such as are destitute of that heart-conformity to the Gospel, wherein the Evangelical Righteousness stands, are so far from it, that we may say to them as our Saviour to the Jews, *Ye have neither heard his voice, nor seen his shape, i.e.* you have never had right notion, or any the least true glimpse of him; your hearts are wholly destitute of all Divine Impressions whatsoever.

Joh. 2.
29.

Joh. 5.37.

8. We may further infer, *from this qualification of the subject of blessedness, That righteousness is no vain thing.* That is not in vain, that ends so well, and hath so happy an issue at last. Scripture tells us, that

8. Infer.

the

Prov. 19. 16. *the labour of the righteous tendeth to life: And that we may understand it of their labour as they are righteous, we are more plainly told, that righteousness tendeth to life; and that to them that sow righteousness shall be a sure reward. That the righteous shall shine as the Sun in the Kingdom of their Father.—The righteous into eternal life. And we here see that righteousness ends in the blessed sight of Gods glorious face, in being satisfied with the Divine likeness: Foolish sinners are justly upbraided that they spend their labour for that which satisfies not; take much pains to no purpose; such are all the works of sin, toilsom, fruitless; what fruit had ye of those things (viz. which ye wrought when you were free from righteousness) whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death. But (it follows) being now made free from sin, and become servants to God (which is paraphrased above by servants to righteousness) ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. The fruit is a continual increase of holiness, a growing more and more like God; till at last everlasting life, satisfaction with his likeness, do crown and consummate all.*

Ch. 11. 14. Ver. 18. Mat. 13. 43. Ch. 25. 46. Isa. 55. 2. Rom. 6. 20, 21.

You have now what to answer to the Atheists profane Query, *What profit is it to serve God?* to what purpose to lead so strict and precise a life? You may now see to what purpose it is; and whereunto godliness (which righteousness here includes) is profitable (as having besides what it intitles

titles to here) *the promise of that life which is to come.*

There needs no more to discover any thing not to be vain in as much as nothing can be said to be so, but *in reference to an end*, as being good for nothing) than the eviſtion of theſe two things.

That it aims at a truly worthy and valuable end ; and that its tendency thereto is direct and certain.

In the preſent caſe, both theſe are obvious enough at the firſt view.

For as to the former of them : All the world will agree, without diſputing the matter, that the laſt end of man (*i e.* which he ultimately propounds to himſelf) is his *beſt good* ; and that he can deſign no further good to himſelf than *ſatisfaction* ; nothing after or beyond that : And what can afford it, if the viſion and participation of the Divine Glory do not ?

As to the latter : Beſides all that aſſurance given by Scripture-conſtitution to the righteous man, concerning his future reward, let the Conſciences be conſulted of the moſt beſotted ſinners, in any lucid interval, and they will give their ſuffrage (*Balaam*, that ſo earneſtly followed the reward of unrighteouſneſs, not excepted), that the way of righteouſneſs is that only likely way to happineſs ; and would therefore deſire to die, at leaſt the righteous mans death, and that their latter end ſhould be like his. So is wiſdom (I might call it righteouſneſs too ;
the

The Blessedness of the Righteous.

the wicked man is the Scripture-Fool, and the righteous the wise-man) justified not by her children only, but by her enemies also.

And sure, 'tis meet that she should be more openly justified by her Children, and that they learn to silence and repress those mis-giving thoughts; *Surely I have washed my hands in vain, &c.* And be stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, for as much as they know their labour is not in vain in the Lord.

Psal. 73:

1 Cor. 15:

. CHAP.

CHAP. XV.

Two other Inferences, from the Consideration of the season of this blessedness: The former, That in as much as this blessedness is not attained in this life, the present happiness of Saints must in a great part consist in hope. The latter, That great is the wisdom and sagacity of the righteous man, which waves a present temporary happiness, and chuses that which is distant and future.

IN as much as the *season* of this blessedness is not on this side the Grave, nor expected by Saints till they awake; we may further infer,

Ninthly, *That their happiness in the mean time doth very much consist in hope.* Or that hope must needs be of very great necessity and use to them in their present state for their comfort and support. It were not otherwise possible to subsist in the absence and want of their highest good, while nothing in this lower world is, as to kind and nature, suitable to their desires, or makes any colourable overture to them of satisfaction

9. *Infer.*

Rom. 8. 23.

1 Cor. 15.
19.

1 Pet. 1. 3.

saction and happiness. Others (as the Psalmist observes) *have their portion in this life*; that good, which as to the species and kind of it, is most grateful to them, is present, under view, within sight; and (as the Apostle) *Hope that is seen is not hope, for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for it?* But those whole more refined spirits (having received the first-fruits of the holy Spirit of God) prompt them to groan after something beyond time, and above this Sublunary Sphere; of them the Apostle there tells us, *that they are saved by hope*. They (as if he should say) subsist by it; they were never able to hold out, were it not for their hope; and that an hope too, beyond this life, as is the hope of a Christian; *if in this life only we had hope in Christ, &c.* The hope of a Christian, as such, is sutable to its productive cause, the resurrection of Christ from the dead; begotten to *a lively hope by the resurrection, &c.* Thence is it the hope of a renewed, never-dying life, the hope of a blessed immortality; whereof Christs resurrection was a certain argument and pledg.

Indeed the new creature is, *ab origine*, and all along an *hoping creature*, both in its *primum* and its *porro esse*. 'Tis conceived, and formed, and nurs't up in hope. In its production, and in its progress towards perfection, 'tis manifestly influenc'd thereby. In the first return of the Soul to God, hope being then planted as a part of the holy
gracious

gracious Nature, now manifestly discovers it self, when the Soul begins to act, (as turning after the reception of the Divine influence, is its act) hope insinuates it self into (or induces rather) that very act. *Returning* is not the act of a *despairing*, but *hoping* Soul. 'Tis God apprehended as reconcilable, that attracts and wins it; while he is look'd upon as an implacable enemy, the Soul naturally shuns him, and comes not nigh, till drawn *with those cords of a man,* the bands of love. While it says, *there is no hope,* it says withall (desperately enough) *I have loved strangers, and after them will I go.* But if *there be any hope in Israel concerning this thing.* If it can yet apprehend God willing to forgive, then *let us make a Covenant, &c.* This presently draws the hovering Soul into a closure and league with him. And thus is the union continued; *unsteadfastness in the Covenant of God,* is resolved into this *not setting, or fixing of hope in him,* or (which amounts to the same) setting of hope in God is directed as a means to *steadfastness of spirit with him, and a keeping of his Covenant.* Revolting Souls are encouraged to *return* to the Lord upon this consideration, that salvation is *hoped* for in vain from any other. The case being indeed the same, in all *after-conversions* as in the *first.* God as *multiplying to pardon,* and still retaining the same Name, *The Lord, the Lord gracious and merciful,* (which name in all the severals that compose and make it up,

Hof. 11.

Jer. 2.

Ezr. 10. 2,
3.

Psal. 78. 7,
13.

Ver. 10.

Jer. 3. 22,
23.

Exod. 34:
6.

Tit. 2. 11,
12, 13.

Rom. 2. 7.

1 Joh. 3. 3.

Heb. 10.
34.

Tit. 1. 1, 2.

is in his Christ) invites back to him the backsliding sinner, and renews his thoughts of returning. And so is he afterwards under the teachings of grace led on by hope, thorough the whole course of Religion towards the future glory. Grace appears, teaching sinners to deny ungodliness, &c. and in the looking for the blessed hope, the glorious appearing of the great God, &c. So do they keep themselves in the love of God, Looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. Thus is the new creature formed in hope, and nourish'd in hope. And if its eye were upon pardon at first, 'tis more upon the promised glory afterwards. And yet that last end hath in a degree its attractive influence upon it, from the first formation of it; 'tis even then taught to design for glory. 'Tis begotten to the lively hope, (where though hope be taken objectively, as the apposition shews of the following words, to an inheritance, yet the act is evidently connoted; for the thing hoped for, is meant under that notion, as hoped for): And its whole following course is an aiming at glory; a seeking glory, honour, immortality, &c. Thus is the work of sanctification carried on; He that bath this hope purifieth himself. Thus are losses sustained; The spoiling of goods taken joyfully through the expectation of the better and enduring substance. The most hazardous services undertaken, even an Apostleship to a despised Christ, — In the hope of eternal life, which God that cannot lie hath promised. All difficulties

Difficulties encountred and overcome, while the *helmet is the hope of salvation*. All worldly evils are willingly endured; and all (such) good things quitted and forsaken, for Christs sake and his Elects. And if the question be ask'd, (as it was once of *Alexander*, when so frankly distributing his treasures among his followers), *What do you reserve for your self?* The resolved Christian makes (with him) that short and brave reply, *HOPE*. He lives upon things future and unseen. The *objects* any one converses with most, and in which his life is as it were bound up, are futable to the *ruling principles of life* in him. *They that are after the flesh, do savour the things of the flesh; they that are after the Spirit, the things of the Spirit.* The Principle of the fleshly life is *Sense*: The Principle of the spiritual life is *Faith*. *Sense* is a mean, low, narrow, incomprehensive principle, limited to a *point*, this Center of Earth, and τὸ νῦν, (this Now) of time; It can reach no *higher* than *terrene* things, nor *further* than *present* things: So brutish is the life of him that is led by it; wholly confined to *matter* and *time*.

Thef. 5. 8.

Rom. 8. 5.

But the righteous live by Faith. Their Faith governs and maintains their life. They steer not their course according to what they *see*, but according to what they *believe*: And their daily *sustenance* is by the same kind of things. Their Faith influences not their actions only, but their comforts and enjoyments. They subsist by the things they believe, even

invisible and eternal things: But it is by the intervening exercise of hope, whose object is the same. The Apostle having told us from Hab. 2. 4. the Prophet, that the *just shall live by Faith*, presently subjoins a description of that Faith Heb. 11. 1. they live by, viz. that it is *the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen*; it substantiates and reallizes, evidences and demonstrates those glorious objects, so far above the reach and sphere of Sense. It is constantly sent out to forage in the invisible Regions for the maintenance of this life: And thence fetches in the provisions upon which *hope* feeds, to the strengthening of the heart, the renewing of life and spirits. Our 2 Cor. 4. *inward man* (saith the Apostle) *is renewed* 16. 18. *day by day*; while we look, or take aim (which is next in the series of the discourse, for the intervening verse is manifestly parenthetical) *not at the things that are seen, but at the things that are not seen*; for the things that are seen are temporal, but the things that are not seen are eternal. And the word here rendred [look] σκπερῶν doth plainly signifie the act of hope as well as that of faith; for it doth not import a meer intuition or beholding, a taking notice or assenting only that there are such things, but a designing or *scoping* at them (which is the very word) with an appropriative eye; as things that notwithstanding their distance, or whatsoever imaginable difficulty, are hoped to be attained to and enjoyed. And here are evidently the distinct parts of Faith and Hope in this business; *Faith*, upon

upon the authority and credit of the Divine Word and Promise, perswades the heart that there is such a glorious state of things reserved for Saints in general, (Faith can go no further, for the Word of Promise goes no further) and so serves instead of eyes in the Divine Light, to view those glories; or it presents them (as so many substantial realities), demonstrates them, submits them to view, whence *Hope* reaches forth to them; contends against, and triumphs over all attending difficulties, and possesses them; gives the Soul an early anticipated fruition of them, for its present support and relief. So that it rejoices in the hope of the glory of God. It might well therefore be said, *I had fainted, if I had not believed*, (or who can express how sad my case had been, if I had not believed? for there is an elegant *Aposiopesis* in the Hebrew Text, the words [*I had fainted*] being supplied in the translation. If I had not believed, what had become of me then? *q. d.*) In as much as faith feeds, as it were, those hopes which more immediately the Lord makes use of, for the strengthening his peoples hearts, as it was intimated in the following words, compared with *Psal.* 3 i. 24. In the present case; *Faith* ascertains the heart, of the truth of the Promises, so that thus the Soul states the case to it self; *Though I have not walkt to and fro in those upper regions, nor taken a view of the heavenly inheritance; though I have not been in the third heavens, and seen the ineffable glory; yet the Gospel-revelation, which hath*

Rom. 5. 2.
Ch. 12. 12.
Psal. 27. 13.
4.

Tit. 1. 2.
Psal. 119.
49.

brought life and immortality to light, the word of the eternal God, who hath told me this is the state of things in the other world, cannot but be true; my faith may therefore be to me instead of eyes; and the Divine testimony must supply the place of light; both together give, methinks, a fair prospect of those far distant glorious objects which I have now in view. Now this awakens hope, and makes it revive, and run to embrace what Faith hath discovered in the Promise. — In hope of eternal life, which God that cannot lie hath promised. 'Tis the word of God that causes the Soul to hope, (i. e. believed, for disbelieved, it signifies nothing with it), and that not only as it contains a *narration*, but a *promise* concerning the future estate. I may without much emotion of heart, hear from a Traveller the description of a pleasant Country, where I have not been; but if *the Lord of that Country* give me, besides the account of it, an assurance of enjoying rich and ample possessions there, *this* presently begets an *hope*, the pleasure whereof would much relieve a present distressed estate; and which nothing, but that of actual possession can exceed. That 'tis not more so with us here, admits of no excuse. Is God less to be believed than a man? Will we deny him the priviledg of being able to discover his mind, and the truth of things credibly, which we ordinarily allow to any one that is not a *convicted Liar*? Christ expects his Disciples should very confidently assure themselves of the preparations made for them in another world, upon that very ground

ground alone, that he had not told them the contrary: *Let not your hearts be troubled, ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Fathers house are many mansions, if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare, &c.* Intimating to them, they ought to have that opinion of his plainness and sincerity, as never to imagine he would have proselyted them to a Religion that should undo them in this world, if there were not a sufficient recompence awaiting them in the other, but he would certainly have let them know the worst of their case: Much more might he expect, they should be confident upon his so often and expressly telling them, that *so it is.*

John. 14.
2.

If his *silence* might be a ground of *hope*, much more his *word*. And surely so grounded an hope cannot but be consolatory, and relieving in this sad interval, till the *awaking hour*.

Lastly, Since this blessedness of the righteous is, as to the season of it, future, not expected till they awake, we may infer, *That 'tis great wisdom and sagacity that guides the righteous mans choice; while he waves a present and temporary, and chuses this future expected blessedness.*

10 Infer.

'Tis true, that Philosophy hath been wont to teach us, that *choice* or election hath no place about the *end*, because that is but *one*, and *choice* always implies a *competition*. But that very reason evinces, that in our present *state* and *case*, *choice* must have place about

the end. That Philosophy might have suted better the state of innocent *Adam*; when there was nothing to blind and bribe a mans judgment, or occasion it to deliberate about the *supreme end*, (then it might be truly said, *deliberation it self was a defection*), nor to pervert and mil-incline his will; and so its action, in *proposing its end*, would be simple *intention*, not *choice*.

But so hath the Apostasie and sin of man blinded and befooled him, that he is at a loss about nothing more than what is the *chief good*. And though Saint *Augustine* reduce *Varro's* 218 differing Sects about it to 12, that's enough to prove (but daily experience doth it more convincingly and sadly) a *real*, though most *unjust* competition. Therefore a sinner can never be blessed without chusing his blessedness; and therein it highly concerns him to chuse aright, and that a spirit of Wisdom and Counsel guide his choice. While Man had not as yet fall'n, to deliberate whether he should adhere to God or no, was a gradual declension, the very inchoation of his fall; but having fall'n *necessity* makes that a *vertue* which was a *wickedness* before. There's no returning to God without *considering our ways*. The so much altered state of the case, quite alters the nature of the things. It was a consulting to *do evil* before; now to *do good*. And hence also, *chusing the Lord to be our God*, becomes a *necessary duty*. Which is to make choice of this very blessedness, that consists in the knowledg,

De Civit.
Dei lib.19.

Josh. 24.

ledg, likeness, and enjoyments of him. And now, in as much as this blessedness is not fully attained by the longing Soul, till time expire, and its eternity commence; here's a great discovery of that Wisdom which guides this happy choice. This is great wisdom in *prospection*; in taking care of the future; and at how much the further distance one can provide, so much the greater reputation of wisdom is justly acquired to him; yea, we seem to place the sum of *practical wisdom* in this one thing, while we agree to call it *providence*, under the contracted name of *prudence*. The Wise-man makes it at least an evidence or part of wisdom, when he tells us, *the prudent foreseeth*, &c. The righteous man so far excels in this faculty, as that his eye looks thorough all the periods of time, and penetrates into eternity, recommends to the Soul a blessedness of that same stamp and alloy that will endure and last for ever. It will not content him to be happy for an *hour*, or for any space that can have an end; after which it shall be possible to him to look back and recount with himself how happy he was once: Nor is he so much solicitous what his present state be, if he can but find he is upon safe terms as to his future and eternal state. *As for me*, saith the Psalmist, (he herein sorts and severs himself from them whose portion was in this life), *I [shall] behold — I [shall] be satisfied, when I awake*; he could not say it was well with him, but it shall be, *q. d.* Let the purblind, short-sighted Sensualist

Prov. 22.3.

*Est bene
non potuit
dicere dis-
t. erat.*

Joh. 16.
20, 22.

Phil. 1. 9,
10.

Epicurus.

embrace this present world, who can see no further: Let me have my portion in the world to come; may my Soul always lie open to the impression of *the powers of the coming world*; and in *this*, so use every thing as to be *under the power of nothing*. What are the pleasures of sin, that are but for a season; or what the sufferings of this *now*, this moment of affliction, to the glory that shall be revealed, to the exceeding and eternal glory? He considers, patient afflicted godliness will triumph at last, when riotous raging wickedness shall lament for ever. He may for a time weep and mourn, while the world rejoices; he may be sorrowful, but his sorrow shall be turned into joy, and his joy none shall take from him. Surely *here is wisdom*; this is the wisdom that is from above, and tends thither. *This is to be wise unto salvation*. The righteous man is a judicious man; he hath in a *measure* that judgment (wherein the Apostle prays the *Philippians* might abound) *to approve the things that are excellent*, and accordingly to make his choice. This is a sense (little thought of by the Author) wherein that sober Speech of the voluptuous Philosopher is most certainly true, *A man cannot live happily, without living wisely*. No man shall ever enjoy the eternal pleasures hereafter, that in this acquits not himself wisely here, even *in this choosing the better part, that shall never be taken from him*. In this the plain *righteous man* out-vies the greatest Sophies, the Scribe, the Disputer, the Politician, the prudent Mammonist, the

the facete Wit; who in their several kinds, all think themselves highly to have merited to be accounted wise : And that this point of wisdom should escape *their* notice, and be the principal thing with *him*, can be resolved into nothing else but the *Divine good pleasure* ! In this contemplation our Lord Jesus Christ is said to have *rejoiced in Spirit*, (it even put his great comprehensive Soul into an extasie), *Father, I thank thee, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and revealed them to babes; even so Father, because it pleased thee* ! Here was a thing fit to be reflected on, as a piece of Divine Royalty; a part *worthy the Lord of heaven and earth* ! And what serious spirit would it not amaze, to weigh and ponder this case a while; to see men excelling in all other kinds of knowledg, so far excelled by those they most contemn, in the highest point of wisdom; such as know how to search into the abstrusest Mysteries of *Nature*; that can unravel, or see through the most perplext intrigues of *State*; that know how to save their own Stake, and secure their private Interest in whatsoever times; yet so little seen (*often, for not many wise*) in the matters that concern an eternal felicity ! It puts me in mind of (what I find observed by some) the *particular madness* (a *dementia quoad hoc*) as 'tis call'd; when persons, in every thing else, capable of sober rational discourse, when you bring them to some one thing (that in reference to which they became

Luk. 10. 21.

Act. 7. 22.

Luk. 12.

came distempered at first) they rave and are perfectly mad: How many that can manage a discourse with great reason and judgment about other matters, who when you come to discourse with them about the affairs of *practical godliness*, and which most directly tend to that *future state of blessedness*, they are as at their wits end, know not what to say; they favour not those things? These are things not understood, *but by such to whom it is given*: And surely that *given wisdom* is the most excellent wisdom. Sometimes God doth, as it were, so far gratifie the world, as to speak their own language, and call them wise that affect to be called so, and that wisdom which they would fain have go under that name; *Moses* 'tis said was skill'd in all the *wisdom of Egypt*, &c. but at other times he expressly calls those wise men fools, and their wisdom folly and madness; or annexes some disgraceful adject for distinction sake; or applies those appellatives ironically, and in manifest derision. No doubt, but any such person as was represented in the Parable, would have thought himself to have done the part of a very wise man, in entertaining such deliberation and resolves, as we find he had there with himself: How strange was that to his ears, *Thou fool, this night shall they require thy soul*, &c. Their wisdom is sometimes said to be *foolish*; or else called the *wisdom of the flesh*, or *fleshly wisdom*; said to be earthly, sensual, devilish; they are said to be *wise to do evil*; while to do good they have

no

no understanding; they are brought sometimes as it were upon the stage with their wisdom, to be the matter of divine triumph; where is the wise? and that which they account *foolishness* is made to confound their *wisdom*. And indeed do they deserve to be thought wise, that are so busily intent upon momentary trifles, and trifle with eternal concernments? that prefer vanishing shadows to the everlasting glory? that follow lying vanities, and forsake their own mercies? Yea, will they not cease to be wise in their own eyes also, when they see the issue, and reap the fruits of their foolish choice? when they find the happiness they preferred before this eternal one is quite over; and nothing remains to them of it, but an afflictive remembrance? that the torment they were told would follow, is but now beginning, and without end? when they hear from the mouth of their impartial Judge; *Remember, you in your life-time had your good things, and my faithful servants their evil; now they must be comforted, and you tormented?* when they are told, *you have received the consolation; you were full, ye did laugh, now you must pine, and mourn, and weep?* Will they not then be as ready to befool themselves, and say as they, *See those (righteous ones) are they whom we sometimes had in derision, and for a proverb of reproach; we fools counted their life madness, and that their end was without honour; but now, how are they numbred among the sons of God, and their lot*

Luk. 6. 24.
25.

Wisd. 5. 3.
&c.

1 Cor. I.

is among the Saints? They that were too wise before, to mind so mean a thing as *Religion* (*the world through wisdom knew not God; strange wisdom!*) that could so *wisely* baffle Conscience, and put fallacies upon their own Souls; that had so ingenious shifts to elude a conviction, and divert any serious thought from fastening upon their spirits; that were wont so *slily* to jeer holiness, seemed as they meant to laugh Religion out of countenance; * they will now know, that a *circumspect walking*, a *faithful redeeming of time*, and *improving it in order to eternity*, was to do, not *as fools*, but *as wise*; and begin to think of themselves, now at last, as all wise and sober men thought of them before.

* Folly is joy to him that is destitute of wisdom.
Prov. 15:

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C H A P.

C H A P. XIV.

The second general Head of the improvement or use of the Doctrine propounded from the Text, containing certain Rules or Prescriptions of Duty connatural thereto.

Rule 1. *That we settle in our minds the true notion of this blessedness.*

Rule 2. *That we compare the temper of our own spirits with it, and labour thence to discern whether we may lay claim to it or no.*

THUS far we have the account of the Truths to be considered and weigh'd that have dependence on the Doctrine of the Text.

Next follow the Duties to be practis'd and done in reference thereto, which I shall lay down in the ensuing *Rules* or Prescriptions,

1. *That we admit and settle the distinct notion of this blessedness in our minds and judgments.* That we fix in our own Souls, apprehensions agreeable to the account this Scripture hath given us of it. This is a Coun-
fel

1. *Rule.*

fel leading and introductive to the rest; and which if it obtain with us, will have a general influence upon the whole course of that *practice* which the Doctrine already opened calls for. As our apprehensions of this blessedness are more distinct and clear, it may be expected more powerfully to command our hearts and lives. Hence it is, in great part, the spirits and conversations of Christians have so little *savour* and *appearance* of Heaven in them. We rest in some general and confused notion of it, in which there is little either of efficacy or pleasure; we descend not into a particular inquiry and consideration what it is. Our thoughts of it are gloomy and obscure; and hence is our spirit naturally listless and indifferent towards it; and rather contents it self to sit still in a Region all lightsom round about, and among objects it hath some present acquaintance with, than venture it self forth as into a new world which it knows but little of. And hence our lives are low and carnal; they look not as though we were seeking the heavenly Country; and indeed who can be in good earnest in seeking after an unknown state? This is owing to our negligence and infidelity. The blessed God hath not been shy and reserv'd; hath not hidden or concealed from us the glory of the other world; nor lock'd up Heaven to us; nor left us to the uncertain guessees of our own imagination, the wild fictions of an unguided phansie; which would have created

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us

us a poetical heaven only, and have mock'd us with false *Elysiums*: But though much be yet within the vail, he hath been liberal in his discoveries to us. Life and immortality are brought to light in the Gospel. The future blessedness (though some refined Heathens have had near guesses at it) is certainly apprehensible by the measure only of Gods revelation of it: For who can determine, with certainty, of the effects of Divine good pleasure, (*'tis your Fathers good pleasure to give you a Kingdom*)? Who can tell before-hand what so free and boundless goodness will do, further than as he himself discovers it? The discovery is as free as the donation. *The things that eye hath not seen, and ear not heard, and which have not entred into the heart of man, God hath revealed to us by his Spirit*: And it follows, ver. 12. *We have received the Spirit of God, that we might know the things freely given us of God.* The Spirit is both the principle of the external revelation, as having inspired the Scriptures which foreshew this glory, and of the internal revelation also, to enlighten blind minds that would otherwise (*μωπάζειν*) never be able to discover things at so great a distance, *see afar off*: Therefore called the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, by which *the eyes of the understanding are enlightned to know the hope of that calling, and the riches of the glory of his inheritance [among] the Saints* (as the *ew* there is most fitly to be rendred).

1 Cor. 2.9.

Eph. 1.17.

But

But this *internal* discovery is made by the mediation and interveniency of the *external*: Therefore having that before our eyes we are to apply our minds to the study and consideration of it; and in that way to expect the free illumination of the holy Spirit. In the mean time we must charge our ignorance, and the darkness of our cloudy thoughts, touching these things, upon our carelessness, that we do not attend; or our incredulity, that we will not believe what God hath revealed concerning them: 'Tis therefore a dutiful attention, and reverential Faith that must settle and fix the notion of this blessedness. If we will not *regard* nor *give credit* to what God hath discovered concerning it, we may sit still in a torpid disconsolate darkness, which we our selves are the Authors of, or (which is no less pernicious) compass our selves with sparks beaten out of our own Forge, walk in the light of our own fire, cheat our Souls with the fond dream of an imagined Heaven, no-where to be found, till we at length lie down in sorrow. How perverse are the imaginations of men in this (as in reference to the *way*, so) in respect of the *end* also; for as they take upon them to fancy another *way* to happiness quite besides and against the plain word of God; so do they imagine to themselves another kind of happiness, such as shall gratifie only their sensual desires; a *Mahometan* (indeed a Fools) Paradise; or at best 'tis but a negative Heaven; they many times
enter-

entertain in their thoughts (of which their sense too is the only measure) a state wherein nothing shall offend or incommode the flesh; in which they shall not hunger, or thirst, or feel want: and when they have thus stated the matter in their own thoughts, we cannot beat them out of it, but that they *desire to go to heaven* (*viz.* the heaven of their own making); when, did they conceive it *truly* and *fully*, they would find their hearts to abhor from it, even as hell it self.

Therefore here we should exercise an authority over our selves; and awaken Conscience to its proper work and business; and demand of it, *Is it not reasonable these divine discoveries should take place with me?* hath not God spoken plainly enough? why should my heart any longer hang in doubt with me, or look wishly towards future glory, as if it were an uncouth thing? or is it reasonable to confront my own imaginations to his discoveries? Charge conscience with the duty it owes to God in such a case; and let his revelations be received with the reverence and resignation which they challenge; and *in them* study and contemplate the blessedness of awakened Souls, till you have agreed with your self fully how to conceive it. Run over every part of it in your thoughts; view the several divine excellencies which you are hereafter to see and imitate; and think what every thing will contribute to the satisfaction and contentment of your spirits. This is a matter of unspeakable consequence.

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Therefore, to be as clear as is possible, you may digest what is recommended to you in this *Rule*, into these more particular directions.

1. *Resolve with your selves, to make the divine revelation of this blessedness the prime measure and reason of all your apprehensions concerning it.* Fix that purpose in your own hearts, so to order all your conceptions about it, that when you demand of your selves, What do I conceive of the future blessedness? and why do I conceive so? the *divine revelation* may answer both the questions. I apprehend what God hath revealed, and because he hath so revealed. The Lord of Heaven sure best understands it, and can best help us to the understanding of it. If it be said of the *origine of this world*, *πιστι νοούμεν*, it may much more be said of the *state of the other*, *we understand it by faith*: That must inform and perfect our intellectuals in this matter.

2. *Therefore reject and sever from the notion of this blessedness, whatsoever is alien to the account Scripture gives us of it.* Think not that sensual pleasure, that a liberty of sinning, that an exemption from the divine dominion, distance and estrangedness from God (which by nature you wickedly affect) can have any ingredieny into (or consistency with) this state of blessedness.

3. *Gather up into it whatsoever you can find by the Scripture-discovery to appertain or belong thereto.* Let your notion of it be to your utter-

uttermoſt, not only *true*, but *comprehenſive* and *full*, and as particular and poſitive, as Gods revelation will warrant: Eſpecially remember 'tis a ſpiritual bleſſedneſs, that conſiſts in the refining and perfecting of your ſpirits by the viſion and likenes of the holy God; and the *ſatisfying* of them thereby for ever.

4. Get the notion of this bleſſedneſs deeply imprinted in your minds; ſo as to abide with you, that you may not be always at a loſs, and change your apprehenſions every time you come to think of it. Let a once well-formed Idea, a clear full ſtate of it be *preſerv'd* entire, and be (as a lively image) always before your eyes, which you may readily view upon all occaſions.

2. That having well fixed the notion of this bleſſedneſs in your minds, you ſeriously reflect upon your ſelf, and compare the temper of your ſpirit with it; that you may find out how it is affected thereto; and thence judg in what likelihood you are of enjoying it. 2. Rule

The general averſion of mens ſpirits to this ſo neceſſary work of *ſelf-reflection*, is one of the moſt deplorable Symptomes of lapped degenerated humanity: The wickedneſs that hath overſpread the nature of man; and a ſecret *conſciouſneſs* and *miſgiving* hath made men afraid of themſelves, and ſtudiouſly to decline all acquaintance with their own Souls; to ſhun themſelves as *Ghosts* and *Spectres*; they cannot endure to appear

to themselves: You can hardly impose a severer task upon a wicked man, than to go retire an hour or two, and commune with himself; he knows not how to *face his own thoughts*: His own Soul is a Devil to him, (as indeed it will be in hell, the most frightful tormenting Devil). Yet, what power is there in man, more excellent, more appropriate to reasonable nature, than that of *reflecting*, of turning his thoughts upon himself? Sense must here confess it self out-done. The eye that sees other objects cannot see it self: But the mind, a *rational Sun*, cannot only project its beams, but revert them; make its thoughts turn inward. It can see its own face, contemplate it self. And how useful an indowment is this to the nature of man? If he err, he might perpetuate his error, and wander infinitely, if he had not this self-reflecting power; and if he do well, never know without it the comfort of a rational self-approbation: Which comfort Paganish Morality hath valued so highly, as to account it did associate a man with the Inhabitants of Heaven, and make him lead his life as among the gods (as their Pagan language is); though the name of the reflecting power [*Conscience*], they were less acquainted with; the thing it self they reckon'd as a kind of *indwelling Deity*, (as may be seen at large in those Discourses of *Maximus Tyrius*, and *Apuleius*, both upon the same subject, concerning the *god of Socrates*). And another giving this
Precept,

Precept, "*Familiarize thy self with the gods*, adds, "and this shalt thou do, if thou bear thy mind becomingly towards them, being well pleased with the things they give, and doing the things that may please thy *Dæmon* or *Genius*, whom (saith he) the most high God (which they mean by *Jupiter*) hath put into every man, as a derivation or extraction from himself (*ἀπόσπασμα*) to be his president and guide; viz. every ones own mind and reason.

Συζῶν
θεοῖς Συ-
νῶν δὲ θε-
οῖς ὁ συν-
χωρῶν δαί-
μῶν ἐνυ-
ποῖς τῶν
ἐαυτοῦ ψι-
χῶν, ἀφ-
ηλούσῳ
ἀφ' ἑ τοῖς
ἀπονεμο-
μένοις :
τοῖς ταν

δὲ ὅσα βάλῃαι ὁ δαίμων, ὅν ἐν ἑαυτῷ προσάττω, &c.
ἐστὶν ἐν ἑαυτῷ νῦν καὶ λόγος. Marc. Anton. lib. 5.

— ἵτος δὲ

And this *mind* or *reason* in that notion of it, as we *approve* our selves to it, and *study* to please it, is the same thing we intend by the name of *Conscience*.

And how high account they had of this work of *self-reflection*, may appear in that they entituled the Oracle to that document, *Know thy self*, esteeming it above humane discovery, and that it could have no lower than a divine Original; therefore consecrating and writing it up in Golden Characters in their *Delphic* Temple (as *Pliny* informs * us) for an heavenly-inspired dictate.

E caelo de-
scendit,
γνωστέ
σεαυτὸν.

* Hist.
Mundi,
The wis-
dom and

significancy of which Dedication *Plato* also (in *Alcibiad. 1.*) takes notice of.

Among Christians that enjoy the benefit of the Gospel-revelation, in which men may
Y 3 be-

Heb. 4. 12.

2 Cor. 13. 5.

behold themselves, as one may his *natural face in a glass*, how highly should this self-knowledge be prized, and how fully attained? The Gospel discovers, at the same time, the ugly deformities of a mans Soul, and the means of attaining a true spiritual comeliness; Yea, it is it self the instrument of impressing the divine image and glory upon mens spirits; which when it is in any measure *done*, they become most sociable and conversable with themselves, and when 'tis but *in doing*, it so convincingly, and with so piercing energy, lays open the very thoughts of mens hearts, so thoroughly rips up and dissects the Soul, so directly turns, and strictly holds a mans eye intent upon himself; so powerfully urges and obliges the sinner to mind and study his own Soul; that where it hath effected any thing, been any way operative upon mens spirits, *they* are certainly supposed to be in a good measure acquainted with themselves, whatever others are. Therefore the Apostle bids the *Corinthians*, if they desire a proof of the *power* and *truth* of his ministry, to consult themselves, [*examine your selves*], and presently subjoins, *know ye not your own selves*? intimating, it was an insupposable thing they should be ignorant; What, Christians and not know your selves? Can you have been under the Gospel so long, and be strangers to your selves? none can think it. Sure 'tis a most reproachful thing, a thing full of ignominy and scandal, that a man should name himself a Christian, and yet be under
gross

gross ignorance, touching the temper and bent of his own Soul: It signifies, that such a one understands little of the design and tendency of the very Religion he pretends to be of, that he was a Christian by meer chance, that he took up and continues his profession in a dream. Christianity aims at nothing, it gets a man nothing, if it do not procure him a better spirit? 'tis an empty insignificant thing, it hath no design in it at all, if it do not design this. It pretends to nothing else. It doth not offer men secular advantages, emoluments, honours; it hath no such aim to make men in that sense rich, or great, or honourable, but to make them *holy*, and fit them for God. He therefore loses all his labour and reward, and shews himself a vain trifler in the matters of Religion, *that makes not this the scope and mark of his Christian profession and practice*; and herein he can do nothing without a constant self-inspection. As it therefore *highly concerns*, it well becomes a Christian under the Gospel, to be in a continual observation and study of himself, that he may know to what purpose he is a Christian; and take notice, what (or whether any) good impressions be yet made upon his spirit; whether he gain any thing by his Religion. And if a man enter upon an enquiry into himself, what more important question can he put than this, *In what posture am I as to my last and chief end?* how is my spirit framed towards it? This is in the intendment and business of the Gospel, *to fit Souls for blessedness:*

And therefore, if I would enquire, What am I the better for the Gospel? this is the sense and meaning of that very question, Is my Soul wrought by it to any better disposition for blessedness? Upon which the resolution of this depends, *am I ever likely to enjoy it, yea or no?* That which may make any heart not deplorably stupid, shake and tremble, that such a thing should be drawn into question; but the case with the most requires it, and it must be so. 'Tis that therefore I would fain here *awaken Souls* to, and *assist them* in; that is, propound something (in pursuance of the present direction) which might both *awaken them* to move this great question, and *help them* in discussing it: Both which will be done in shewing the *importance* of this latter *ultimate question in it self*, and then the *subserviency of the former subordinate one, towards the deciding it*. These two things therefore I shall a little stay upon.

1. To shew and urge the requisiteness of debating with our selves, the likelihood or hopefulness of our enjoying this blessedness.

2. To discover that the *present habitude*, or disposedness of our spirits to it, is a very proper apt *medium*, whereby to judg thereof.

First, As to the former of these: Methinks our business should do it self; and that the very mention of such a blessedness, should *naturally* prompt Souls to bethink themselves, *doth it belong to me? have I any thing to do with*

with it? Methinks every one that hears of it should be beforehand with me, and prevent me here. Where is that stupid Soul that reckons it an indifferent thing to attain this blessed state, or fall short of it? When thou hearest this is the common expectation of Saints, *to behold the face of God, and be satisfied with his likeness, when they awake*; Canst thou forbear to say with thy self, and what shall become of me when I awake? what kind of awaking shall I have? shall I awake amidst the beams of glory, or flames of wrath? If thou canst be perswaded to think this no matter of indifferency, then stir up thy drowsie Soul to a serious inquiry, how 'tis likely to fare with thee for ever; and to that purpose put thy conscience to it, to give a free, sincere answer to these few Queries.

1. Canst thou say thou art already *certain* of thy eternal blessedness? Art thou so sure, that thou need'st not enquire? I know not who thou art that now readest these lines, and therefore cannot judg of thy confidence, whether it be right or wrong; only that thou may'st not answer too hastily, consider a little, that *certainity of salvation is no common thing*; not among (I speak you see of subjective certainty) the heirs of salvation themselves. How many of Gods holy ones, that cannot say they are *certain*; yea, how few that can say they are? That exhortation to a Church of Saints, *Work out your salvation with fear and trembling*, (they of whom he expresseth such confidence, Chap. 1. 6. over whom

Phil. 2. 12.

whom he so glories, *Chap. 4. 1.*) implies this to be no common thing; so doth Christs advice to his Disciples, *Strive to enter in at the strait gate*; and St. Peter's to the scattered Jews (that he saith had obtained *like precious faith*, &c.) *give diligence to make your calling and election sure*; with many more passages of like import. Yea, how full is the Scripture of the complaints of *such* crying out of broken bones, of festring wounds, of distraction by divine terrors. Now what shall we say in this case, when so eminent Saints have left us Records of the distresses and agonies of their spirits, under the apprehended displeasure of God? May it not occasion us to suspend a while, and consider? have we much more reason to be confident than they? and do we know none that lead stricter and more holy lives than we, that are yet in the dark, and at a loss in judging their spiritual states? I will not say, that we *must* therefore think our selves *bound* to doubt, because another possibly better than we doth so. Unknown accidents may much vary the cases. But who would not think, that reason and modesty had quite forsaken the world, to hear (where the odds is so vastly great) the vain boasts of the loose generality, compared with the humble solicitous doubts of many serious knowing Christians? To see *such* trembling about their soul-concernments; who have walkt with God, and served him long in prayers and tears? when multitudes that have nothing where-
on

on to bottom a confidence but *Pride* and *Ignorance*, shall pretend themselves certain! If drawing breath a while, thou wilt suspect thou have reason not to be peremptory in thy confidence; thou wilt sure think thy self concern'd to enquire further. Urge thy Soul then with this question again and again, Art thou yet certain, yea or no?

2. Is it a comfortable state to be *uncertain*, or to have before thee apparent grounds of a rational and just doubt? For causeless doubts may sooner vanish, when their causelessness is once discovered; and so they are less likely to keep a person that is capable of understanding his own case, under a stated discomfort. But I suppose thee, in order to the answering the foregoing Query, to have in some measure considered the case; and that with a preponderating apprehension of danger in it, thou returnest it *uncertain*. Uncertain, man! And what, wilt thou remain uncertain? wilt thou sit still so, till thou perish? shall thy life hang in doubt, and thy Soul be in jeopardy every hour, till the everlasting flames resolve the doubt, and put the matter out of question with thee? What course canst thou apply thy self to, but to enquire and search further into thy own state, to avoid the torture of thy own fears, the pangs and dreadful expectation of a palpitating misgiving heart: 'Tis true, that inquisitive diligent doubtfulness hath hope and comfort in it. But doubtfulness joined with a resolution of casting off all further care, is utterly

terly desperate and disconsolate; what remains to thee in that case, but *a fearful looking for of fiery indignation*? how canst thou pass an hour in peace, while thou apprehendest it unlikely, thou see the face, and be satisfied with the image of God? do not thy own thoughts represent to thee, the amazing sights, the horrid images which shall for ever entertain and possess thy Soul? Art thou not daily haunted with Divine Horrors? when thou sayest at night, *thy bed shall refresh thee*, art thou not *terrified with dreams, and affrighted with visions*? Dost thou not say in the morning, would to God it were evening; and in the evening, say, would to God it were morning? And while thou knowest not what else to do, meditate only changes instead of remedies? Or if thou find no such trouble invading thy mind, let me further ask:

3. Is it *reasonable* to be secure in such a state of uncertainty? Debate this matter a little while with thy self. Is it thy *reason*, or thy *sloth* that makes thee sit still and forbear to look into thy spiritual affairs? Is it any *rational consideration*, or not rather the *melancholic disposition* of a Soul, afraid to know its own state, that suspends thee from inquiring? what hast thou to say, that looks like a reason? Is it that it will disturb thy thoughts, interrupt thy pleasures, fill thee with anxious cares and fears, which thou art as loth to admit, as burning coals into thy bosom? Is it that thou canst not endure to look upon

upon so dreadful an object, as *the appearing danger*, or *possibility of thy being miserable to eternity*? And art thou therefore resolved to shut thine eyes, and cry peace, peace? This is to avoid a present inconvenience, by an eternal mischief, (a gross over-straining the Paradox)! for avoiding the present fear of Hell to run into it; as if because a man cannot bear the thoughts of dying, he should presently cut his own throat. Vain man! canst thou not bear the thoughts of eternal misery; how wilt thou bear the thing? And how long-liv'd dost thou think that peace shall be, that thou purchasest upon so dear and hard terms? canst thou promise thy self an hour? may'st thou not lose thy purchase and price together the next moment? canst thou *defer* thy misery by *forgetting* it; or will thy judgment linger, and thy damnation slumber, while thou securely lingereſt and slumbereſt? canst thou wink Hell into nothing; and put it out of *being*, by putting it out of thy *thoughts*? Alas man! open thy eyes when thou wilt, thou shalt find thou haſt not bettered thy case by having kept them fast closed. The bitterness of death is not yet past. The horrid image is still before thee. This is not a phansied evil, which a man may dream himself into, and (*eâdem operâ*) with as little difficulty, dream himself out of it again: No, thy case is miserable and dangerous when thou composeſt thy self to sleep; if thou awakeſt thou wilt find it still the same; only thou didſt
not

not apprehend it before, for then thou would'st not have slept : As the Drunkard that kills a man, and after falls asleep in his drunken fit, he awakes and understands his wretched case. Would his sleeping on, till the Officers arrest had awak'd him, have mended the matter with him ?

But thou wilt possibly say, Is it not better here to have a little quiet now, than to be miserable by *sad thoughts here*, and miserable by *actual suffering hereafter* too ? Is not one death enough ? why should one kill himself so often over ; and hasten misery, as if it came on too slowly ?

Better, man ? an hard choice. Supposing thou art to be *eternally* miserable, (if thou understand'st that word *eternity*,) the good or evil of this little inch of time, will signify so little with thee, as hardly to weigh any thing in the Scale of a rational judgment. But what, art thou now *dreaming* while thou thus reasonest ? Dost thou yet no better understand thy case ? art thou not under the Gospel ? Is it not the day of thy hope, and of the Lords grace and patience towards thee ? It was said, that sleeping would not better thy case ; but it was not said, that *awaking* would not ; but all that is here said, is designed to the awakening of thee, that thou may'st know thy case, and endeavour a redress. Dost thou think any man in his sober wits would take all this pains thus to reason with thee, if that were the acknowledged and agreed state of thy case,

case, that it were already taken for granted thou must perish? We might as well go preach to Devils, and carry down the Gospel into Hell. But dost thou think the holy merciful God sent his Son and his Ministers to mock men; and to treat with them about their eternal concerns, when there is no hope? Were that thy case, thou hadst as good a pretence as the Devil had, to complain of *being tormented before thy time*. But if thou be not wilfully perverse, in mistaking the matter we are reasoning about, thou may'st understand, thy reason is here appealed to *in this*; Whether having so fair hopes before thee, as the Gospel gives, of this blessedness we are discoursing of, it be reasonable from the apprehension of a *meer possibility* of miscarrying, (which can only be through thy wilful security and neglect), to give up thy self to a supine negligence, and indulge that security which is so sure to ruin thee, and exchange a *possible hoped Heaven*, for a *certain Hell*; or whether rather it be not reasonable to stir up thy Soul to consider in what posture thou art, towards the attainment of this blessedness, that thou may'st accordingly steer thy course in order to it? If an Accusation, or a Disease do threaten thy life; or a suspected flaw thy Title to thy Estate, would'st thou not think it reasonable to enquire into thy case? And is it not much more *desirable*, in a matter of this consequence, to be at some certainty? and *prudent* to endeavour it, if
it.

it may possibly be attained? Whence let me further ask:

4. *Canst thou pretend it to be impossible?* Hath God left thee under a *necessitated ignorance*, in this matter? or denied thee *sufficient means* of knowing how 'tis with thee in respect of thy spiritual Estate? Though he have not given thee a *List*, or told thee the Number or Names of his sanctified ones, yet hath he not sufficiently described the Persons, and given the Characters by which they may be known? And hath he not furnish'd thee with a *self-reflecting power*, by which thou art inabled to look into thy self, and discern whether thou be of them or no? Doth he not offer and afford to serious diligent Souls, the assisting light of his blessed Spirit to guide and succeed the enquiry? And if thou find it difficult to come to a speedy clear issue, to make a present certain judgment of thy case; ought not that to engage thee to a patient continued diligence, rather than in a rash despairing madness to desist and cast off all? In as much as the difficulty, though great, is not insuperable; and the necessity and advantage incomparably greater. And (though divers other things do confessedly fall in) the principal difficulty lies in thy *aversion* and *unwillingness*: Thou art not put to traverse the Creation, to climb Heaven, or dig through the Earth; but thy work lies nigh thee, in thy own heart and spirit; and what is so nigh, or should be so familiar to thee,

as thy self? 'Tis but casting thy eye up-
on thy own Soul, to discern which way
'tis inclin'd and bent, thou art urged to.
Which is that we propounded next to dis-
cover: *viz.*

Secondly, *That we are to judge of the hope-
fulness of our enjoying this blessedness, by the
present habitude or disposedness of our spirits
thereto.* For what is that righteousness which
qualifies for it, but the impress of the Gos-
pel upon the minds and hearts of men?
The *Gospel-revelation* is the only *Rule* and
Measure of that righteousness: It must there-
fore consist in *conformity thereto.* And look
to the frame and design of the Gospel-reve-
lation, and what doth so directly correspond
to it, as that very *habitude* and *disposedness
of spirit* for this blessedness whereof we speak?
Nothing so answers the Gospel, as a pro-
pension of heart towards God (gratifi'd
in part now, and increasing till it find a
full satisfaction), a desire of knowing him
and of being like him. 'Tis the whole de-
sign of the Gospel, which reveals his glo-
ry in the face of Jesus Christ, to work and
form the spirits of men to this. They
therefore whose spirits are thus wrought
and framed, are *righteous* by the *Gospel-
measure*, and by *that righteousness* are evi-
dently *intituled* and *fitted* for this blessedness.
Yea, that righteousness hath in it (or ra-
ther is) the Elements, the first Principles,
the Seed of this blessedness. There can there-
fore be no surer *Rule* or *Mark* whereby to
Z judg

judg our states, whether we have to do with this blessedness, may expect it yea or no, than *this*.

How stand we affected towards it ; in what disposition are our hearts thereto ? Those fruits of righteousness, by which the Soul is qualified to appear without offence in the day of Christ, the several graces of the sanctifying Spirit, are nothing else but so many holy Principles, all disposing the Soul towards this blessedness, and the way to it; *mortification, self-denial, and godly sorrow*, take it off from other objects, the *world, self, and sin*; *repentance* (that part of it which respects God) turns the course of its motion towards God the *end*; *faith* directs it through Christ the *way*; *love* makes it move freely; *desire* earnestly; *joy* pleasantly; *hope* confidently; *humility*, evenly; *fear*, circumspectly; *patience*, constantly and perseveringly. All conspire to give the Soul a right disposition towards this blessedness. The result of them all is *heavenliness*, an *heavenly temper of spirit*. For they all (one way or other), as so many Lines and Rays have respect to a *blessedness in God* (which is heaven) as the *point* at which they aim; and (the *cuspis*) the *point* in which they meet, in order to the touching of that *objective point*, is *heavenliness*. This is the ultimate and immediate disposition of heart for this blessedness; the result (the *terminus productus*) of the whole work of righteousness in the Soul; by which 'tis said to be as it were,

were, *nata ad gloriam*, begotten to the eternal inheritance. Concerning this therefore chiefly institute thy enquiry. Demand of thy self, Is my Soul yet made *heavenly*, bent upon eternal blessedness, or no? And here thou mayest easily apprehend, of how great concernment it is, to have the right notion of Heaven, or future blessedness, as was urged under the *foregoing Rule*. For if thou take for it another thing, thou missest thy mark, and art quite beside thy business: But if thou retain a right and scriptural state and notion of it, The Rule thou art to judge by is sure, *They shall have Heaven whose hearts are intent upon it, and framed to it*. Scripture is every-where pregnant and full of this.

The Apostle plainly intimates, *this will be the Rule of Gods final Judgment*. (Certainly it cannot be unsafe for us to judge our selves by the same Rule). He tells us, *When God shall judge every one according to his works* (the great business of the judgment day), *eternal life shall be the portion of them, who by patient continuance in well-doing, sought glory, and honour, and immortality*, (which are but other expressions of the same thing): What can be more plain? *They shall have eternal life and glory that seek it*; whose hearts are towards it. Again, speaking of true Christians, *διὰ τῆς πίστεως*, (*i. e.* in a way of contradistinction from *Pseudo-Christians*, such as he saith were enemies of the Cross), he gives us (among other) this brand of

Rom. 2.
6, 7.

Phil. 3. 18,
19, 20.

Col. 3. 1, 2,
3, 4.

Heb. 11. 1,
13, 16.

these latter, that *they did mind earthly things*, and tells us, *their end would be destruction*; but gives us this opposite Character of the other, *our conversation is in heaven*; our trade and business, our daily negotiations (as well as the privileges of our Citizenship) lie there (as his expression imports), and thence intimates the opposite end of such, whence we look for a [Saviour], not destruction, but salvation. And in the same Context of Scripture, where *they that are risen with Christ*, and *who shall appear with him in glory*, are requir'd to set their [mind] on things above, not on things on the earth: That we may understand this, not to be their duty only, but their character, we are immediately told, they who follow not this counsel, and *mortifie not their earthly members* (those lusts that dispose men towards the earth, and to grovel in the dust, as the graces of the Spirit dispose them heavenward, and to converse with glory) *are the children of disobedience, upon whom the wrath of God cometh*. The Faith the just live by, *is the substance of things hoped for, &c.* Such believers are *confessed, avowed strangers on earth*; and seekers of the better, the heavenly Country, whence 'tis said, *God will not be ashamed to be called their God*; plainly implying, that as for low terrene spirits, that love to creep on the earth, and embrace Dunghills, God will be ashamed of them; he will for ever disdain a relation to them, while and as such. And if we will be determined

terminated by the exprefs word of our great Redeemer, to whom we owe all the hopes of this blessedness; when he had been advising not to *lay up treasure on earth*, but *in heaven*, he presently adds, *where your treasure is, there will your hearts be also*. If thy treasure, thy great interest, thy precious and most valuable good be above, that will attract thy heart, it will certainly be disposed thitherward.

Mat. 6. 19,
20, 21.

Yet here it must carefully be considered, that in as much as this blessedness is *thy end*, i. e. thy *supream good* (as the notion of *treasure* also imports), thy heart must be set upon it *above any other enjoyment*; else all is to no purpose. 'Tis not a faint, slight, over-mastered inclination that will serve the turn, but (as all the forementioned Scriptures import) such as will bespeak it a mans business to seek Heaven, his main work; and give ground to say of him, *his heart is there*. If two Lovers sollicit the same person, and speaking of them in comparisons she say, *this* hath my heart; is it tolerable to understand her, as meaning him she loves less? so absurd would it be to understand Scriptures, that speak of such an intention of heart heaven-ward, as if the faintest desire, or coldest wish, or most lazy inconstant endeavour were all they meant. No, 'tis a steady, prevalent, victorious direction of heart towards the future glory, in comparison whereof, thou despisest all things else (all temporal terrene things), that must

be the (*evidential*) ground of thy hope to enjoy it. And therefore in this deal faithfully with thy own Soul, and demand of it; Dost thou esteem this blessedness above all things else? Do the thoughts of it continually return upon thee, and thy mind and heart, as it were *naturally* run out to it? Are thy chiefests solitudes and cares taken up about it, lest thou should'st fall short and suffer a disappointment? Dost thou favour it with pleasure; hath it a sweet and grateful relish to thy Soul? Dost thou bend all thy powers to pursue and press on towards it? Urge thy self to give answer *truly* to such enquiries; and to consider them *seriously*, that thou may'st do so.

Such whose spirits are either *most highly raised and lift up to Heaven*, or *most deeply depressed and sunk into the Earth*, may make the clearest judgment of themselves. With them that are of a middle temper, the trial will be more difficult, yet not fruitless, if it be managed with serious diligence, though no certain conclusion or judgment be made thereupon.

For the *true design* and use of all such enquiries and reflections upon our selves (which let it be duely considered) is, *not to bring us into a state of cessation from further endeavours*; as if we had nothing more to do (suppose we judg the best of our state that can be thought); but *to keep us in a wakeful temper, of spirit*; that we may not forget our selves in the great business we have yet before

us, but go on with renewed vigor through the whole course of renewed endeavours, wherein we are to be still conversant, till we have attained our utmost mark and end. Therefore is this present enquiry directed, as introductive to the further duty, that in the following Rules is yet to be recommended.

Z 4

CHAP.

CHAP. XVII.

Rule 3. *Directing such as upon enquiry find, or see cause to suspect, a total aversion in themselves to this blessedness, to be speedy and restless in their endeavours to have the temper of their spirits altered and made suitable to it. Doubts and Objections concerning the use of such endeavours, in such a case, answered. Some Considerations to enforce this Direction propounded and pressed.*

3 Rule. 3. **T**hat if upon such reflection we find or suspect our selves wholly disaffected and unsuitable to this blessedness, we apply our selves to speedy incessant endeavours to get the temper of our spirits changed and fitted thereto.

The state of the case speaks it self, that there is no sitting still here. This is no condition (Soul) to be rested in ; unless thou art provided to encounter the terrors of eternal darkness, and endure the torture of everlasting burnings. Yet am I not unapprehensive how great a difficulty a carnal heart will make of it, to bestir it self in order to any redress of so deplorable a case. And how
real

real a difficulty it is, to say any thing that will be thought regardable to such a one. Our sad experience tells us, That our most efficacious words are commonly wont to be entertained as neglected puffs of winds; our most convictive reasonings and perswasive exhortations lost (yea, and though *they* are managed too in the name of the great God) as upon the deaf and dead: Which is too often apt to tempt into that resolution, of *speaking no more in that name.* And were it not that the dread of that great Majesty restrains us, how hard were it to forbear such Expostulations; “Lord, Why are we commonly sent upon so vain an errand? Why are we required to speak to them that will not hear, and expose thy sacred Truths and Counsels to the contempt of sinful Worms; to labour day by day in vain, and spend our strength for nought? Yea, we cannot forbear to complain, “None so labour in vain as we: Of all men none so generally prosperous and unsuccessful. Others are wont to see the fruit of their labours, in proportion to the expence of strength in them: But our strength is labour and sorrow (for the most part) without the return of a joyful fruit. The Husbandman plows in hope, and sows in hope, and is commonly partaker of his hope: We are sent to plow and sow among Rocks and Thorns, and in the high-Way; how seldom fall we upon good ground? Where have we any increase?
“Yea,

"Yea, Lord, how often are men the harder
 "for all our labours with them, the deader
 "for all endeavours to quicken them? Our
 "breath kills them whom thou sendest us to
 "speak life to; and we often become to them
 "a *deadly savour*. Sometime, when we think
 "somewhat is done to purpose, our labour
 "all returns, and we are to begin again; and
 "when the duties we perswade to, come di-
 "rectly to cross mens interests and carnal in-
 "clinations, they revolt and start back, as if
 "we were urging them upon flames, or the
 "Swords point; and their own Souls and
 "the eternal glory are regarded as a thing
 "of nought: Then Heaven and Hell become
 "with them Phancies and Dreams; and all
 "that we have said to them false and fabu-
 "lous. We are to the most *as men that mock*,
 "in our most serious warnings and counsels;
 "and *the word of the Lord is a reproach*. We
 "sometimes fill our mouths with Arguments,
 "and our hearts with Hope, and think, sure
 "they will now yield; but they esteem our
 "strongest reasonings (as *Leviathan* doth Iron
 "and Brass) but as *Straw* and *rotten Wood*;
 "and laugh at Divine threatnings as he doth
 "at the shaking of the Spear. Yea, and when
 "we have convinc'd them, yet we have done
 "nothing; though we have got their *Judg-*
 "*ments* and *Consciences* on our side and their
 "own, their *Lusts* only reluctate and carry
 "all. They will *now* have their way though
 "they perish. We see them perishing under
 "our very eye, and we cry to them (in thy
 "name,

"name, O Lord) to turn and live, but they
"regard us not. For these things sometimes
"we weep in secret, and our eyes trickle down,
"with tears; yea, we cry to thee, O Lord,
"and thou hearest us not; thy hand seems
"shortened, that it cannot save; it puts not
"on strength as in the days of old: It hath
"snatch'd Souls by thousands, as firebrands
"out of the fire; but now thou hidest and
"drawest it back. Who hath believed our re-
"port? To whom is the Arm of the Lord
"revealed? Mean-while even the Devils in-
"struments prosper more than we: And he
"that makes it his business to tempt and
"entice down Souls to Hell, succeeds more
"than we that would allure them to Hea-
"ven.

But we must speak, whether men will hear
or forbear; though it concerns us to do it
with fear and trembling. Oh, how solemn a
business is it to treat with Souls! and how
much to be dreaded, lest they miscarry through
our imprudence or neglect! I write with so-
licitude what shall become of these lines; with
what effect they will be read (if they fall
into such hands) by them, whom they most
concern: Yea, and with some doubt, whe-
ther it were best to write on or forbear:
Sometimes one would incline to think it a
merciful Omission, lest we add to the account
and torment of many at last; but *sense of duty*
towards all, and *hope of doing good to some* must
over sway. Considering therefore the state of
such Souls I am now dealing with, I apprehend

hence their may be obstructions to the entertainment of the counsel here recommended, of two sorts; partly *in their minds*, partly *in their hearts*; something of *appearing reason*, but more of *real perverse will*. That which I shall do in pursuance of it, will fall under two answerable heads:

1. A reply to certain Doubts and Objections, wherein to meet with the former.
2. The proposal of some Considerations, wherein to contend against the latter.

As to the first: It appears, men are grown *ingeniously wicked*, and have learned how to *dispute* themselves into Hell; and to neglect what concerns their eternal blessedness *with some colour and pretence of reason*. It will therefore be worth the while to discuss a little their more specious pretences, and consider, their more obvious (supposable) scruples, which will be found to concern, either the *possibility, lawfulness, advantage, or necessity* of the endeavours we perswade to.

Doub. 1.

1. *Is it a possible undertaking you put us upon; or, is there any thing we can do in order to the change of our own hearts? We find our selves altogether undesirous of those things wherein you state blessedness, and they are without savour to us. If therefore the notion you give us of blessedness be right, all the work necessary to qualify us for it is yet to be done; we yet remain wholly destitute*

destitute of any principle of life, that may dispose us to such relishes and enjoyments. If the new Creature (as you say) consist in a suitable temper of Spirit unto such a state as this, 'tis as yet wholly unformed in us : And is there any thing to be done by a dead man in order to life ? Can a Child contribute any thing to its first formation ? or a Creature to its coming into being ?

If you were serious in what you say, methinks you should have little mind to play the Sophisters, and put fallacies upon your selves, in a matter that concerns the life of your soul. And what else are you now doing ? For sure, otherwise one would think it were no such difficulty to understand the difference between (the *esse simpliciter*) the meer being of any thing, and (the *esse tale*) its being such or such ; by the addition of somewhat afterward to that being. Though nothing could contribute to its own being simply ; yet sure when it is in being, it may contribute to the bettering or perfecting of it self, (even as the unreasonable creatures themselves do) : And if it be a creature naturally capable of acting with design, it may act designedly in order to its becoming so or so qualified, or the attaining of somewhat yet wanting to its perfection. You cannot be thought so ignorant, but that you know the new Creature is only an additional to your former being : And though it be true, that it can do no more to its own production than the unconceived Child (as nothing can act before it is), doth

Reply.

it

it therefore follow, that *your reasonable Soul*, in which it is to be formed, cannot use Gods prescribed means in order to that blessed change? You cannot act *holily* as a Saint; but therefore can you not act *rationally* as a man! I appeal to your reason and conscience in some particulars.

Is it *impossible* to you to attend upon the dispensation of that Gospel, which is *Gods power unto salvation*, the Seal by which he impresses his Image, the glass through which his glory shines to the changing of Souls into the same likeness? Are you not as able to go to Church as the Tavern; and to sit in the assembly of *Saints* as of *Mockers*?

Is it *impossible* to you, to consult the written word of God, and thence learn what you must be, and do in order to blessedness? Will not your eyes serve you to read the Bible as well as a Gazette or Play-book?

Is it *impossible* to enquire of your Minister, or an understanding Christian Neighbour concerning the *way* and *terms* of blessedness! Cannot your tongue pronounce these words, *what shall I do to be saved*, as well as those, *pray what do you think of the weather*; or what news is there going? Yet further:

Is it *impossible* to *apply your thoughts* to what you meet with suitable to your case, in your attendance upon preaching, reading, or discourse? Have all such words a barbarous sound in your ear? Can you not consider what *sense* is carried under them; what they import and signify? Can you not bethink
your

your self, Do the Doctrines of God, and Christ, and the *life to come*, signifie something or nothing? or do they signifie any thing worth the considering, or that 'tis fit for me to take notice of?

And yet to proceed a little further with you:

I pray you once more demand of your selves, and put your Consciences closely to it, Whether, when they have told you (as no doubt they will), that such things deserve your consideration, it be impossible to you, to use your *considering power thus*, and employ it even about these things? Do but make this easie tryal, and then say, whether it be impossible. See if you cannot select one hour on purpose, wherein to sit down by your selves alone, with this resolution; *Well, I will now spend this hour in considering my eternal concernments.* When you have obtained so much of your self; set your thoughts on work, (you will find them voluble and unfixt, very apt to revolt and fly off from things you have no mind to, but) use your authority with your self; tell your Soul (or let it tell it self), *these things concern thy life.* At least, taking this prepared matter along with thee (that thou may'st not have this pretence, thou knowest not what to think of) try if thou canst not think of these things, now actually suggested and offered to thy thoughts: As namely,

Consider, That thou hast a reasonable immortal Soul, which as it is *liable to eternal*
*
miser

misery, so it is capable of eternal blessedness.

That this blessedness thou dost understand to consist *only in the vision of the blessed God, in being made like to him, and in the satisfaction* that is thence to result and accrue to thee.

Consider (what thy very objection supposeth), That thou findest the temper of thy Spirit to be altogether indisposed and averse to such a blessedness. Is it not so? is not this thy very case? feel now again thy heart; try, is it not at least coldly affected towards this blessed state?

Is it not then obvious to thee to consider, that the temper of thy spirit must be changed, or thou art undone? That in as much as thy blessedness lies in God, this change must lie in the alteration of thy dispositions, and the posture of thy spirit towards him. Further,

Canst thou not consider the power and fixedness of thy averfation from God; and with how mighty a weight thy heart is carried and held down from him? Try, lift at thy heart, see if it will be raised God-ward and Heaven-ward? Dost thou not find, it is as if thou wert lifting at a Mountain, that it lies as a dead weight and stirs not? Ponder thy case in this respect. And then,

Is it not to be considered, That thy time is passing away apace? That if thou let thyself alone, 'tis likely to be as bad with thee *to morrow as this day*, and as bad *next day as to morrow*? And if thy time expire and thou

thou be snatch'd away in this state, what will become of thee? And dost thou not therefore see a necessity of considering what-ever may be most moving, and most likely to incline thy heart God-ward, of pleading it more loudly and importunately with thy self?

And canst thou not consider and reason the matter thus? "O my Soul, what's the
"reason that thou so drawest back and hang-
"est off from thy God? that thou art so
"unwilling to be *blessed in him*? that thou
"shouldst venture to run thy self upon eter-
"nal perdition rather? What cause hath he
"ever given thee to disaffect him? What is
"the ground of thy so mighty prejudice?
"Hath he ever done thee hurt? Dost thou
"think he will not accept a returning Soul?
"that is to give the lies to his Gospel; and
"it becomes not a perishing wretch so to
"provoke him in whom is all its hope. Is
"the eternal glory an undesirable thing? or
"the everlasting burnings tolerable? Canst
"thou find a way of being for ever blessed
"*without God*; or whether he will or no?
"or is there a sufficient present pleasure in
"thy sinful distance from God, to outweigh
"Heaven and Hell? Darest thou venture up-
"on a resolution of giving God and Christ
"their last refusal; or say, thou wilt never
"hearken to, or have to do with them more?
"or darest thou venture to do what thou
"darest not resolve? and act the wickedness
"thou canst not think of? scorn eternal Ma-

A a

"jesty"

“jeſty and Love? ſpurn and trample a bleeding Saviour?

Commune thus a while with thy ſelf, but if yet thou find thy heart relent nothing, thou canſt yet further conſider, That it lies not in thy power to turn thy own heart, (or elſe how comeſt thou thus to object)? And hence,

Canſt thou avoid conſidering *this is a diſtreſſed Caſe*? that thou art in great ſtraits; liable to periſh (yea, ſure to do ſo, if thou continue in that ill temper of ſpirit), and wholly unable to help thy ſelf? Surely thou canſt not but ſee this to be a moſt diſtreſſed caſe.

I put it now to thy Conſcience, Whether being thus led on, thou canſt not go thus far? See whether upon trial thy Conſcience give thee leave to ſay, *I am not able thus to do or think*: And be not here ſo fooliſh, as to ſeparate the action of the *firſt cauſe* and the *ſecond*, in judging thy *ability*: Thou may’ſt ſay no, I cannot think a good thought *without God*: True, ſo I know thou canſt not move thy finger without God; but my meaning in this appeal to thy Conſcience is, Whether upon trial thou findeſt not an *affiſtance ſufficient* to carry thee thus far?

Poſſibly thou wilt ſay, Yea, but what am I the better? I am only brought to ſee my ſelf in a diſtreſſed periſhing condition, and can get no further.

I anſwer, ’Tis well thou art got ſo far, if thou do indeed ſee thy ſelf periſhing, and thy

thy drowſie Soul awake into any ſenſe of the ſadneſs of thy caſe. But I intend not thus to leave thee here; therefore let me further-
more demand of thee: What courſe would'ſt thou take in any other diſtreſs, wherein thou know'ſt not what to do to help thy ſelf? would not ſuch an exigency, when thou findeſt thy ſelf pinch'd and urged on every ſide, and every way is ſhut up to thee, that thou art be-
ſet with calamities, and canſt no way turn thy ſelf to avoid them; would not ſuch an exigency force thee down on thy knees, and ſet thee a-crying to the God of mercy for relief and help? Would not *Nature* it ſelf prompt to this? Is it not *Natural* to lift up Hands and Eyes to Heaven when we know not what to do?

*Audio vul-
gus cum ad
cælum ma-
nus ten-
dunt nihil
aliud quam*

Deum dicunt, vulgi iſte naturalis eſt ſermo. Min. Fel.

Octav.

Therefore having thus far reaſoned with thee about thy *conſidering power*: Let me demand of thee, if thou canſt not yet go ſomewhat further than *conſidering*? that is, in ſhort:

Is it impoſſible to thee to *obey this dictate of nature*? I mean, repreſent the deplorable caſe of thy Soul before him that made it; and crave his merciful relief? Do not diſpute the matter; thou canſt not but ſee this is a *poſſible* and a *rational* courſe, as thy caſe is. *Should not a people ſeek unto their God*? Fall down therefore low before him; pro-
ſtrate thy ſelf at the foot-ſtool of his mercy.

seat. Tell him, thou understandest him to be the *Father of Spirits*, and the *Father of Mercies*; that thou hast heard of his great mercy and pity towards the spirits of men in their forlorn lapsed state: What a blessedness he hath designed for them; what means he hath designed to bring them to it. Tell him thou only needest a temper of spirit suitable to this blessedness he invites thee to; That thou canst not master and change thy sensual earthly heart; thou know'st he easily can; Thou art come to implore his help, that his blessed and holy Spirit may descend and breathe upon thy stupid dead Soul; and may sweetly encline and *move* it towards him; that it may eternally *rest* in him; and that thou may'st not perish, after so much done in order to thy blessedness, only for want of a heart to entertain it. Tell him, thou com'st upon his gracious encouragement, having heard he is as ready to give his Spirit *to them that ask him*, as Parents bread to their craving Children rather than a stone: That 'tis for life thou beggest: That 'tis not so easie to thee, to think of perishing for ever: That thou canst not desist and give up all thy hopes: That thou shalt be in Hell shortly, if he hear and help thee not.

Lastly, If thus thou obtain any communication of that holy blessed Spirit, and thou find it gently moving thy dead heart, let me once more demand of thee: Is it impossible to forbear this or that external act of sin *at this*

this time, when thou art tempted to it? sure thou canst not say, 'tis impossible. What necessitates thee to it? And then certainly thou may'st as well ordinarily with-hold thy self from running into such customary sensualities, as tend to grieve the Spirit, debauch Conscience, stupifie thy Soul, and hide God from thee.

And if thou canst do all this, do not fool thy slothful Soul with asidle a conceit, That thou hast nothing to do, but to sit still, expecting till thou drop into Hell.

2. But have I not reason to fear, I shall but add sin to sin in all this? and so encrease the burden of guilt upon my own Soul; and by endeavouring to better my case, make it far worse.

Doub. 2.

Two things I consider, that suggest to me this fear, The { *Manner,*
End,

of the duties you put me upon, as they will be done by me in the case wherein I apprehend my self yet to lie.

1. Manner. (As to the positive actions you advise to), I have heard, the best actions of an unregenerate person are sins, through the sinfulness of their manner of doing them; though as to the matter of the thing done, they be enjoined and good: And though it be true, that the regenerate cannot perform a sinless duty neither; yet their persons and works being covered over with the righteousness of Christ, are look'd upon as

having no sin in them, which I apprehend to be none of my case.

2. End. You put me upon these things in order to the attaining of blessedness; and to do such things with intinution to a reward, is to be (as may be doubted) unwarrantable, mercenary, and servile.

Reply.

First, As to this former reason of your Doubt; methinks the propofal of it answers it. For as much as you acknowledg the matter of these actions to be good and duty (and plain it is, they are *moral duties*, of common perpetual concernment to all *persons* and *times*), dare you decline or dispute against your duty?

* Therefore as to that form of expression [that such acts of unregenerate men are sins], that is a Catachrestical piece of Rhetorick, which being so understood, is harmless; but

Sure, if we compare the evil of *what is so substantially in it self*, and *what is so circumstantially*, only by the adherence of some *undue modus*, or manner; it cannot be hard to determine which is the *greater* and *more dreadful evil*. As to the present case; should'st thou, when the great God sends abroad his Proclamation of Pardon and Peace, refuse to attend it, to consider the contents of it, and thy own case in reference thereto, and thereupon to sue to him for the life of thy own Soul? Dost thou not plainly see thy refusal must needs be more provoking than thy defective performance? *This speaks disability*, but *that rebellion and contempt* *. Besides, dost thou

to use it in propriety of speech, and thence to go about to make men believe, that it's a sin to do their duty, is void both of truth and sense, and full of danger unto the Souls of men.

not

not see, that thy objection lies as much against every other action of thy life? the Wise-man tells us, *the plowing of the wicked is sin*, (if that be literally to be understood); and what wouldst thou therefore sit still and do nothing? Then how soon would that *idleness* draw on *gross wickedness*? And would not that be a dreadful confutation of thy self, if thou who didst pretend a scruple, that thou mightest not pray, read, hear, meditate, shalt not scruple to play the glutton, the drunkard, the wanton, and indulge thy self in all riot and excess? Yea, if thou do not break out into such exorbitancies. Would any one think him serious that should say, it were against his Conscience to be *working out his salvation*, and *striving to enter in at the strait gate*; *seeking first the Kingdom of God*, &c. Would not this sound strangely? And especially, that in the mean time it should never be against his Conscience, to trifle away his time, and live in perperpetual neglects of God, in persevering Atheism, Infidelity, hardness of heart, never regretted or striven against: As if these were more innocent?

Prov. 21. 4.

And what thou say'st of the different case of the *regenerate*, is impertinent; for as to this matter, the case is not different, they that take themselves to be *such*, must not think that by their supposed interest in the righteousness of Christ, their *real sins* cease to be such, they only become *pardoned sins*; and shall they therefore sin more boldly than other men, because they are surer of pardon?

Secondly, As to the *other* Ground of this Doubt, there can only be a fear of sinning, upon this account, to them that make more sins and duties than God hath made. The Doubt supposes *Religion* inconsistent with *Humanity*; and that God were about to rase out of the nature of man, one of the most radical and fundamental Laws written there, *A desire of Blessedness*: And supposes it against the express scope and tenor of his whole Gospel-revelation. For what doth that design, but to bring men to blessedness? And how is it a means to compass that design, but as it tends to engage mens spirits to design it too? Unless we would imagine they should go to Heaven blindfold, or be roll'd thither as stones that know not whither they are mov'd; in which case the Gospel, that reveals the eternal glory, and the way to it, were an useless thing. If so express words had not been in the Bible, as that *Moses had respect to the recompence of reward*; yea, that our Lord Jesus himself, *for the joy set before him endured the Cross, &c.* this had been a little more colourable, or more modest.

And what, do not all men, in all the ordinary actions of their lives, act allowably enough, with intuition to much lower ends? even those *particular ends* which the works of their several Callings tend to, else they should act as Bruits in every thing they do. And would such a one scruple, if he were pining for want of Bread, to beg or labour for it for this end, *to be relieved*. 'Tis the mistaking

mistaking of the *notion* of Heaven that hath also an ingrediency into this Doubt, (if it be really a Doubt): What, is it a low thing to be *filled with the divine fulness*? to have *his glory replenishing our Souls*? to be perfectly freed from sin? in every thing conformed unto this holy Nature and Will? That our minding our interest in this, or any affairs, should be the principal thing with us, is not to be thought: Our Supreme end must be the same with his, who made all things for himself, *of whom, through whom, and to whom all things are*, that he alone might have the glory. But subordinates need not quarrel. A lower end doth not *exclude* the higher, but *serves* it; and is as to it a means. God is our end, as he is to be *glorified and enjoyed by us*: Our glorifying him is but the *agnition of his glory*; which we do most in *beholding and partaking it*; which is therefore in direct subordination thereto.

3. But it may further be doubted, *What if it be acknowledged, that these are both things possible and lawful; yet to what purpose will it be to attempt any thing in this kind? O what assurance have I of success! Is there any word of promise for the encouragement of one in my case? Or is God under any obligation to reward the endeavours of nature with special grace? Wherefore, when I have done all I can, he may withhold his influence, and then I am but where I was, and may perish notwithstanding.*

Doub. 3.

And

And suppose thou perish notwithstanding! Do but yet consult a little with thy own thoughts: Which is more tolerable and easie to them to perish, *as not attaining what thy fainter strugglings could not reach*; or for the *most direct wilful rebellion, doing wickedly as thou couldest*? Or who shall have, thinkest thou, the more fearful condemnation? He that shall truly say when his Master comes to judgment, "I never had indeed (Lord)
 "an heart so fully changed and turned to
 "thee, as should denote me to be the subject
 "of thy saving pardoning mercy; but thou
 "knowest (who knowest all things) I long
 "(and with some earnestness) did endeavour it. Thou hast been privy to my secret desires and moans, to the weak strivings of a listless distempered spirit, not pleased with it self, aiming at a better temper towards thee. I neglected not thy prescribed means; only that grace which I could not challenge, thou wast pleased not to give: thou didst require what I must confess my self to have owed thee; thou did'st withhold only what thou owed'st me not; therefore must I yield my self a convicted guilty wretch, and have nothing to say why thy sentence should not pass. Or he that shall as truly hear from the mouth of his Judg, "Sinner, thou wast often forewarned of this approaching day, and call'd upon to provide for it; thou hadst *Precept upon Precept, and Line upon Line*. The counsels of life and peace were with frequent
 "impor-

“importunity prest upon thee, but thou re-
“jected’st all with proud contempt, did’st
“despise with the same profane scorn the
“offers, commands, and threats of him that
“made thee; hardenedst thy heart to the most
“obstinate rebellion against his known Laws;
“did’st all the wickedness to which thy
“heart prompted thee, without restraint;
“declined’st every thing of duty which his
“Authority, and the exigency of thy own
“case did oblige thee to; did’st avoid as
“much as thou couldest to hear or know
“any thing of my will; could’st not find one
“serious considering hour in a whole life-
“time, to bethink thy self, what was likely
“to become of thee when thy place on earth
“should know thee no more. Thou might’st
“know, thou wast at my mercy, thy breath
“in my hand, and that I could easily have
“cut thee off any moment of that large space
“of time my patience allow’d thee in the
“world; yet thou never thoughtst it worth
“the while to sue to me for thy life. De-
“struction from the Lord was never a terror
“to thee. Thou wouldst never be brought
“upon thy knees; I had none of thy ad-
“dressies; never didst thou sigh out a se-
“rious request for mercy; thy Soul was not
“worth so much in thy account. Thy blood,
“wretch, be upon thy guilty head: *Depart*
“*accursed into everlasting flames, &c.*

Come now, use thy reason a while, em-
ploy a few sober thoughts about this mat-
ter; remember, thou wilt have a long eter-
nity

nity wherein to recognize the passages of thy life, and the state of thy case in the last judgment. Were it supposable, that one who had done as the former, should be left finally destitute of Divine Grace and perish: Yet in which of these cases wouldst thou chuse to be found at last?

But why yet shouldst thou imagine so sad an issue, as that after thine utmost endeavours grace should be withheld, and leave thee to perish; *because God hath not bound himself by promise to thee?* what promise have the Ravens to be heard when they cry? *But thou art a sinner:* True, otherwise thou wert not without promise; the promises of the first Covenant would at least belong to thee. Yet experience tells the world, his *unpromised mercies* freely flow every where; *The whole earth is full of his goodness;* yea, *but his special grace is convey'd by promise only, and that only through Christ; and how can it be communicated [through him] to any but those that are in him?* What then, is the *first in-being in Christ* no *special grace?* or is there any *being in him* before the *first*, that should be the ground of that *gracious communication?* things are plain enough, if we make them not intricate, or intangle our selves by foolish subtilties. God promises sinners indefinitely pardon, and eternal life for the sake of Christ, on condition that they believe on him. He gives of his good pleasure that grace whereby he draws any to Christ, without promise *directly made to them*, whether *absolute* or *conditional*; though he give it for the sake of Christ
also.

also. His discovery of his purpose to give such grace to some, indefinitely, amounts not to a promise *claimable by any* ; for if it be said to be an *absolute promise to particular persons*, who are they? whose duty is it to believe it made to him? If *conditional*, what are the conditions upon which the first grace is *certainly* promised? who can be able to assign them?

But poor soul! thou need'st not stay to puzzle thy self about this matter. *God binds himself to do what he promises; but hath he anywhere bound himself to do no more?* Did he promise thee thy being; or that thou shouldst live to this day? did he promise thee the bread that sustains thee, the daily comforts of thy life? Yea, (what is nearer the present purpose), did he promise thee a station under the Gospel? or that thou shouldst ever hear the name of Christ, if ever his Spirit have in any degree mov'd upon thy heart, inclin'd thee at all seriously to consider thy eternal concerns, did he before-hand make thee any promise of that?

A promise would give thee a *full certainty of the issue*, if it were *absolute*, out of hand? if *conditional*, as soon as thou findest the condition performed. But what canst thou act upon no lower rate than a *foregoing certainty*, a *preassurance of the event*?

My friend, *consider* a little, (what thou canst not but *know already*) that 'tis Hope (built with those that are rational, upon rational probabilities, with many, oftentimes upon none at all) is the great Engine that moves the World,
that

that keeps all sorts of men in action. Doth the Husbandman *foreknow* when he Plows and Sows, that the Crop will answer his cost and pains? Doth the Merchant *foreknow*, when he imbarques his goods, he shall have a safe and gainful return? Dost thou *foreknow*, when thou eatest, it shall refresh thee? when thou takest Physick, that it shall recover thy health, and save thy life? Yea further, can the *covetous* man pretend a promise, that his unjust practices shall *enrich* him? the *malitious*, that he shall prosper in his design of *revenge*? the *ambitious*, that he shall be *great and honourable*? the *voluptuous*, that his pleasure shall be always *unmixt with gall and wormwood*? Can any say, they ever had a promise to ascertain them that profaneness and sensuality would bring them to Heaven? that an ungodly dissolute life would end in blessedness? Here the Lord knows men can be confident and active enough without a promise, and against many an express threatening. Wilt thou not upon the hope thou hast before thee, do as much for thy soul, for eternal blessedness, as men do for uncertain riches, short pleasures, an airy soon-blasted name? yea, as much as men desperately do to damn themselves, and purchase their own swift destruction?

Or canst thou pretend, though thou hast no pre-assuring promise, thou hast no hope? Is it nothing to have heard so much of Gods gracious Nature? Is it suitable to the reports, and discoveries he hath made of himself, to let a poor wretch perish at his feet, that lies prostrate

prostrate there expecting his mercy? Didst thou ever hear he was so little a lover of souls? Do his giving his Son, his earnest, unwearied strivings with sinners, his long patience, the clear beams of Gospel-light, the amiable appearances of his Grace, give ground for no better, no kinder thoughts of him? yea, hath he not expressly stiled himself *the God hearing prayers*, taken a name on purpose to encourage *all flesh to come to him*? Wilt thou dare then to adopt those profane words, *what profit is it to pray to him*? and say, 'tis better sit still, resolving to perish, than address to him, or seek his favour, because he hath not by promise assured thee of the issue, and that, if he suspends his grace, all thou dost will be in vain?

Psal. 65. 23

Job 21. 15

“How wouldst thou judg of the like resolution? If the Husbandman should say, “when I have spent my pains and cost in “breaking up and preparing the Earth, and “casting in my Seed; if the Sun shine not, “and the rain fall not in season, if the influences of Heaven be suspended, if God withhold his blessing, or if an invading enemy anticipate my Harvest, all I do and expend is “to no purpose; and God hath not ascertain’d “me of the contrary, by express promise, “’tis as good therefore sit still. Censure and “answer him and thy self both together.

But thou wilt yet it may be say, that though all this may be possibly true, yet thou canst not all this while be convinc’d of any need so earnestly Doub. 1.
to

to busie thy self about this affair. For God is wont to surprise souls by preventing acts of Grace, to be found of them that sought him not, to break in by an irresistible power, which they least thought of. And to go about to anticipate his grace, were to detract from the freeness, and so from the glory of it.

Reply.

But art thou not in all this afraid of charging God foolishly? When the merciful God, in compassion to the souls of men, hath given his Gospel, constituted and settled a standing Office to be perpetuated through all ages for the publication of it; Invited the world therein to a treaty with him, touching the concerns of their eternal peace; required so strictly their attendance to, and most serious consideration of his proposals and offers; encouraged, and commanded their addresses to him, set up a Throne of Grace on purpose, wilt thou dare to say, all this is needless?

When God speaks to thee, is it *needless* for thee to hear him, or regard what he saith? or when he commands thee to pour forth thy soul to him, wilt thou say, 'tis a *needless thing*?

*Necessitas
medii.*

1 Pet. 1. 23.
Jam. 1. 18.
Rom 6. 17.
Joh 17. 17.

Dost thou not plainly see, that the peculiar appropriate aptitude of the things prest upon thee, speaks them *necessary*, as *means* to their designed end; whence also they are fitly called *Means of Grace*? Is not the Word of God the *immortal seed*? Are not Souls begotten by that Word to be the *first fruits of his creatures*? Is it not the Type, the Mould, or Print by which Divine Impressions are put upon the Soul:

Soul: *The instrument by which he sanctifies.* Are not the exceeding great and precious Promises the *Vehicula*, the Conveighancers of the *Divine Nature*? And what can be the means to mollifie and melt the obdurate heart of a sinner, to assuage its enmity, to overcome it into the love of God, to transform it into his Image, but the Gospel discovery of Gods own gracious and holy Nature? And can it operate to this purpose without being heard, or read, and understood, and considered, and taken to heart? Do but compare this *Means* God works by, with the *Subject* to be wrought upon, and the *Effect* to be wrought, and nothing can be conceived more *adequate* and *fitly corresponding*.

Pet. 1.

But in as much as there hath been an enmity between God and sinners, and that therefore the *whole entire means of reconciliation* must be a *Treaty*; and that a Treaty cannot be managed or conceived without *mutual interlocution* therefore must the sinner have a way of expressing its own sense to God, as well as he speaks his mind to it; which shews the necessity of *Prayer* too: and therefore, because the *Peace* begins on his part, (though the War began on ours), he *calls* upon sinners to open themselves to him; *Come now, let us reason together*: he invites addressees; *Seek the Lord while he may be found, and call upon him while he is nigh*, &c. And doth not the natural relation it self between the *Creator*

Isa. 1.
Chap. 53.

Isa. 8. 19.

*Necessitas
præcepti.*

and a *Creature* require this, besides the exigency of our present case? Every *Creature* is a *Supplicant*; its *necessary dependance* is a *natural Prayer*. *The eyes of all things look up, &c.* 'Tis the proper glory of a *Deity* to be depended on and addrest to. *Should not a people seek unto their God?* 'Tis an appeal to reason; is it not a congruous thing?

Further, Dost thou not know, thy *Makers Will made known* infers upon thee a *necessity* of obeying; unless thou think the *breach* between God and thee is better to be healed by *Rebellion*; and that the only way to expiate wickedness, were to continue and multiply it. Is it a needless thing to comply with the Will of him that gave thee *Breath and Being*? And whose *Power* is so absolute over thee, as to all thy concerns, both of time and eternity?

Again, while thou pretendest these things are needless, come now, speak out freely; What are the more necessary affairs wherein thou art so deeply engaged, that thou canst not suffer a diversion? What is the service and gratification of thy flesh and sense so important a business, that thou canst be at no leisure for that *more needless* work of *saving thy Soul*? Where is thy reason and modesty? Dost thou mind none other, from day to day, but *necessary affairs*? Dost thou use, when thou art tempted to vain dalliances, empty discourses, intemperate

rate indulgence to thy appetite, so to answer the temptation, *It is not necessary?* Or art thou so destitute of all Conscience and shame, to think it *unnecessary* to work out thy salvation, to *strive to enter in at the strait gate that leads to life?* but most indispensably necessary to be very critically curious about what thou shalt eat, and drink, and put on; and how to spend thy time with greatest ease and pleasure to thy flesh, that it may not have the least cause to complain it is neglected?

Thy pretence, *That God is wont to be found of them that sought him not*, to the purpose thou intendest it, is a most ignorant or malicious abuse of Scripture. The Prophet is in that Text foretelling the Calling of the *Gentiles*; who, while they remained such, did not ('tis true) enquire after God; but then he expressly first tells us, (personating God), *I am sought of them that asked not for me*, (that is, after the Gospel came among them), and then 'tis added, *I am found (upon this seeking, plainly) of them that sought me not*, (i. e. who once in their former darkness, before I revealed my self in the Gospel-dispensation to them, *sought me not*): q. d. I am now sought of a people that lately sought me not, nor asked after me, and I am found of them. But what's this to thy case; whom God hath been, in the Gospel, earnestly inviting to seek after him, and thou all this while refushest to comply with the invitation?

Isa. 65. 1.

* Mr. Baxter.

And suppose thou hear of some rare instances of persons, suddenly snatch'd by the hand of Grace out of the midst of their wickedness, as fire-brands out of the fire, Is it therefore the safest course to go on in a manifest rebellion against God, till possibly he may do so by thee also? How many thousand may have dropt into Hell since thou heard'st of such an instance, (as a worthy person speaks to that purpose *)? If thou hast heard of one *Elijah* fed by Ravens, and of some thousands by our Saviours Miracles, canst thou thence plead a repeal of that Law to the World, *They that will not labour shall not eat*? Or is it a safer or wiser course to wait till food drop into thy mouth from Heaven, than to use a prudent care for the maintenance of thy life? If thou say, thou hearest but of few that are wrought upon in this way, of *their own foregoing expectation and endeavour*; Remember, (and let the thought of it startle thee), that there are *but few that are saved*. And therefore are so few wrought upon in this way, because so few will be persuaded to it. But canst thou say (though God hath not bound himself to the meer natural endeavours of his Creature neither), that ever any took this course, and persisted with faithful diligence, but they succeeded in it?

What thou talkest of the *freeness of Gods grace*, looks like an hypocritical pretence. Is there no way to honour his grace, but by *affront*?

affronting his authority? but to sin, *that grace may abound?* Sure grace will be better pleased by Obedience, than by such Sacrifice. For a miserable perishing wretch to use Gods means to help it self, doth that look like merit? Is the Beggar afraid thou shouldst interpret his coming to thy door and seeking thy alms, to signifie, as if he thought he had deserved them? I hope thou wilt acknowledg thy self less than the least of all Gods mercies, and that thou canst not deserve from him a morsel of Bread; mayest thou not therefore in thy necessity labour for thy living, lest thou shouldst intrench upon the freeness of Divine Bounty? With as much wisdom and reason mightst thou decline the use of all other means to preserve thy life (which thou must owe always to free mercy), to eat when thou art hungry, to take Physick when thou art sick, lest thou shouldst intimate thy self to have merited the strength and health sought thereby.

Nor can I think of any rational pretence that can more plausibly be insisted on, than these that have been thus briefly discust. And it must needs be difficult to bring any appearance of reason for the patronage of so ill a cause, as the careless giving up of a mans Soul to perish eternally, that is visibly capable of eternal blessedness. And certainly were we once apprehensive of the case, the attempt of disputing a man into such a resolution, would appear much more ridicu-

lous, than if one should gravely urge arguments to all the neighbourhood, to perswade them to burn their houses, to put out their eyes, to kill their children, and cut their own throats. And sure, let all imaginable pretences be debated to the uttermost, and it will appear, that nothing with-holds men from putting forth all their might in the endeavour of getting a spirit suitable to this blessedness, but an obstinately perverse and sluggish heart; despoil'd and naked of all shew of reason and excuse. And though that be a hard task to reason against *meer will*, yet that being the way to make men willing, and the latter part of the work proposed in pursuance of *this direction*, I shall recommend only some such considerations as the Text it self will suggest, for the stirring up and perswading of slothful reluctant hearts, (chusing those as the most proper limits, and not being willing to be infinite herein, as amidst so great a variety of considerations to that purpose, one might).

That in general which I shall propose, shall be only the *misery of the unrighteous*; whereof we may take a view in the opposite blessedness *here* described. The *Contradictories* whereto will afford a *Negative*, the *Contraries* a *Positive* description of this misery. So that each Consideration will be double; which I shall now (rather glance at than) insist upon.

1. Consider then, If thou be found at last unqualified for this blessedness, How wilt thou

Pa- { *Damni.*
na { *Senjus.*

thou bear it to be banish'd eternally from the *blessed face of God*? There will be those that shall behold *that face in righteousness*; so shalt not thou: The wicked is driven away in his wickedness, with a *never more see my face*.

Again, What amazing Visions wilt thou have! What gastly, frightful objects to converse with, amidst those horrors of eternal darkness; when the Devil and his Angels shall be thy everlasting associates! What direful images shall those accursed enraged Spirits, and thy own fruitful parturient imagination for ever entertain thee with, and present to thy view!

2. Is it a small thing with thee, to be destitute of all those *inherent excellencies* which the perfected Image of God, whereof thou wast capable, comprehends? View them over in that (too defective) account some of the former pages gave thee of them. Thou art none of those bright Stars, those Sons of the morning, those blessed glorified Spirits, thou mightst have been. But

Consider, *What art thou*? What shalt thou for ever be? What image or likeness shalt thou bear? Alas, poor wretch, thou art now a Fiend! conformed to thy hellish partners; thou bearest *their accursed likeness*. Death is now finished in thee; and as thou *sowedst to the flesh*, thou *reapest corruption*. Thou art become a loathsome Carcass; the Worms that never die, abound in thy putrified filthy Soul. Thou hast an Hell in thee. Thy venomous

lusts are now grown *mature*, are in their full grown state. If a world of iniquity, a fulness of deadly poison, tempered by Hell-fire, is here sometimes to be found in a *little member*, what will there then be in all thy parts and powers !

3. Consider, How blessed a *satisfaction* dost thou lose? how pleasant and delightful a *rest*, arising both from the sight of so much glory, and so peaceful a temper and constitution of spirit? Here thou might'st have enjoyed an eternal undisturbed rest.

But for *rest* and *satisfaction*, thou hast *vexation* and *endless torment*, both by what thou beholdest, and what thou feelest within thee. Thy dreadful visions shall not let thee rest: But the chiefest matter of thy disquiet and torment is in the very *temper* and *constitution* of thy Soul. Thy horrid lusts are fuller of poisonous energy, and are destitute of their wonted objects, whence they turn all their power and fury upon thy miserable self. Thy enraged passions would fly in the face of God, but they spend themselves in tormenting the Soul that bred them. Thy curses and blasphemies, the invenom'd Darts pointed at Heaven, are reverberated and driven back into thy own heart. And therefore,

4. Consider, What *awaking* hast thou? Thou awakest not into the mild and cheerful light of that blessed day, wherein the Saints of the most High hold their solemn joyful triumph.

But thou awakest into that great and terrible

rible day of the Lord (dost thou desire it, for what end is it to thee)? a day of darkness, *and not light*; a gloomy and stormy day. The day of thy *birth* is not a more *hateful*, than this is a *dreadful* day. Thou awakest and art beset with terrors, presently apprehended and drag'd before thy glorious severe Judge, and thence into eternal torments. O happy thou, mightest thou never awake, might the grave conceal, and its *more silent darkness* cover thee for ever. But since thou must awake then, how much more happy wert thou, if thou wouldst suffer thy self to be awaken'd now! What, to lose and endure so much, because thou wilt not now a little bestir thy self, and look about thee? Sure thy Conscience tells thee, thou art urg'd but to what is *possible*, and *lawful*, and *hopeful*, and *necessary*; methinks, if thou be a man, and not a stone; if thou hast a reasonable Soul about thee, thou shouldst presently fall to work, and rather spend thy days in serious thoughts, and prayers, and tears, than run the hazard of losing so transcendent a glory, and of suffering misery, which as *now* thou art *little* able to *conceive*, thou wilt *then* be *less* able to *endure*.

C H A P.

C H A P. XVIII.

Rule 4. Directing to the endeavour of a gradual improvement in such a disposition of Spirit (as shall be found in any measure already attained) towards this blessedness. That 'tis blessedness begun which disposes to the Consummate state of it. That we are therefore to endeavour the daily encrease of our present knowledg of God, conformity to him, and the satisfaction of our spirits therein.

4 Rule.

THat when we find our selves in any disposition towards this blessedness, we endeavour a gradual improvement therein, to get the habitual temper of our spirits made daily more suitable to it.

*Phil. 3. 14.
Bez. Beiov.*

We must still remember we have not yet attained, and must therefore continue pressing forward to this mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. That prize (not price, as we commonly mis-read it in our Bibles) of which the Apostle here speaks, is (as may be seen by looking back to v. 8, 9, &c.) the same with the blessedness in the Text. Such a knowledg of Christ, as should infer at
last

last his participation with him in his state of glory, or of the *resurrection of the dead*. This is the ultimate term, the scope or end of that high calling of God in Christ; so 'tis also stated else-where, who hath *called* us into his eternal glory by Christ Jesus.

Pet. 5. 10:

Now we should therefore frequently recount how far short we are of this glory, and stir up our Souls to more vigorous endeavours in order to it.

Our suitability to this blessedness stands in our *having the elements and first principles of it in us*; 'tis glory only that fits for glory; some previous sights and impressions of it, and a pleasant complacential relish thereof, that frame and attemper us by degrees to the full consummate state of it. This is that therefore we must endeavour,

A growing { *Knowledge of God,*
 { *Conformity to him, and*
 { *Satisfiedness of Spirit therein.*

What we expect should be one day perfect, we must labour may be, in the mean time, always growing.

1. *Our knowledge of God.* The knowledge of him I here principally intend, is not *notional* and *speculative*, but (which is more ingredient to our blessedness, both inchoate and perfect) that of *converse*, that *familiar knowledge* which we usually express by the name of *acquaintance*. See that this knowledge of him be encreased daily. Let us now use our

Jer. 2. 5.

Prov. 13. 20.

our selves much with God. Our knowledge of him must aim at *conformity to him*; and how powerful a thing is *converse* in order hereto? How insensibly is it wont to transform men, and mould anew their Spirits, Language, Garb, Deportment? To be remov'd from the *solitude* or *rudeness* of the Country to a *City* or *University*, What an alteration doth it make? How is such a person divested by degrees of his rusticity, of his more uncomely and agrest manners? Objects we converse with, beget their Image upon us, *They walked after vanity, and became vain*, saith *Jeremiah*; and *Solomon*, *He that walketh with the wise, shall be wise*. Walking is an usual expression of converse. So to converse with the *holy* is the way to be *holy*, with *heaven* the way to be *heavenly*, with *God* the way to be *God-like*.

Prov. 4. 18.

Let us therefore make this our present business, much to *acquaint our selves with God*. We count upon seeing him *face to face*, of being always in his presence beholding his glory; that speaketh very intimate acquaintance indeed. How shall we reach that pitch? What, to live now as Strangers to him? Is that the way? *The path of the righteous is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day*. The Text shews us the *righteous mans end*, to behold the glory of Gods face, &c. 'Tis easie to apprehend, then his way must needs have in it a growing brightness, as he comes still nearer this end. Every nearer approach to a lucid thing infers
(to

(to us) an increase of light from it. We should therefore be *following on to know the Lord*, and we shall see his *going forth will be before us as the morning*. He will be still visiting us with *renewed, increasing light*, (for such is morning-light, *fresh and growing-light*), and ere long it will be perfect day. Labour we to improve our knowledg of God to such a degree of acquaintance as our present state can admit of: To be as inward with him as we can, to familiarize our selves to him. His Gospel aims at this, to make those that were *afar off nigh*. Far-distant objects we can have no distinct view of. He can give us little account of a person that hath only seen him afar off; so God beholds the proud afar off, that is, he will have no acquaintance with them: Whereas with the humble he will be familiar; *he will dwell*, (as in a family) *with them*. So the ungodly behold God till he bring them in, and make them nigh; then they are no longer strangers, but of his family and household, now thoroughly acquainted. Several notes there are of a *through acquaintance* which we should endeavour may concur in our acquaintance with God, in that analogy which the case will bear.

To know his nature; or (as we would speak of a man), what will please and displease him so as to be able in the whole course of our daily conversation to *approve* our selves to him. To have the skill so to manage our conversation, as to continue a correspondence, not interrupted by any our offensive unpleasing demeanours;

Hol. 6. 3.

Isa. 57. 15.

demeanours : To walk worthy of God unto all well-pleasing. It concerns us most to study and endeavour this *practical knowledge* of the nature of God ; what trust, and love, and fear, and purity, &c. his faithfulness, and greatness, his goodness, and holiness, &c. do challenge from us : What may in our daily walking be agreeable, what repugnant to the several Attributes of his being.

* Psal. 25.
14.

To know his secrets ; to be as it were of the Cabinet-Council * (the word used by the Psalmist hath a peculiar significancy to that purpose ; to signifie, not only counsel, but a Council, or the *confessus* of persons that consult together). This is his gracious vouchsafement, to humble reverential souls. *The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him ;* such acquaintance with him is to be sought, to know the (communicable) secrets both of his mind and heart. Of his mind, his truths, Gospel-mysteries, that were kept *secret* from ages and generations. *We have the mind of Christ.* This is great inwardness. Of his heart ; his love, his good-will, his kind bosom-thoughts towards our souls.

To know his methods, and the course of his dispensations towards the World, his Church, and specially our own Spirits. This is great *knowledge of God*, to have the skill to trace his footsteps, and observe by comparing times with times, that such a course he more usually holds ; and accordingly, with great probability, collect from what we have seen and observed, what we may expect. What order
* and

and succession there is of storms of wrath, to clouds of sin; and again of peaceful lucid intervals, when such storms have infer'd penitential tears. In what exigencies, and distresses, humble mourners may expect Gods visits and consolations. To recount in how great extremities former experience hath taught us not to despair; and from such experience still to argue our selves into fresh reviving hopes, when the state of things (whether publick or private, outward or spiritual) seems forlorn.

To know the proper seasons of address to him; and how to behave our selves most acceptably in his presence, In what dispositions and postures of Spirit, we are fittest for his converse, so as to be able to come to him in a good hour, *in a time when he may be found.*

Psal 32. 6.

To know his voice: This discovers acquaintance. *The ear trieth words, as the mouth tasteth meats.* Gods righteous ones, that are filled with the fruits of righteousness, do proportionably abound in *knowledg, and in all sense.* They have quick, naked, unvitiated senses, to discern between good and evil; yea, and can have the suffrage of several senses concerning the same Object. They have a kind of taste in their ear. They taste the good word of God, even in his previous workings on them. *Being new-born* they are intimated to have *tasted in the word* how gracious the Lord is. As they grow up thereby, they have still a more judicious sense, and can more certainly distinguish, when God speaks to them,

Job 12. 11.

Phil. 1. 9.

αἰσθητικῶς

ἡσυχασ

ῶσα

Heb. 5. ult.

Heb. 6.

1 Pet. 1.

2, 3.

and

John 10. and when a stranger goes about to counterfeit his voice. They can tell at first hearing, what is grateful and nutritive, what offensive and hurtful to the divine life ; what is harmonious and agreeable, what dissonant to the Gospel *already received*, so that an Angel from Heaven must expect no welcom, if he bring *another*.

To know his inward motions and impulses ; When his hand toucheth our hearts, to be able to say *this is the finger of God*, there is something divine in this touch. *My beloved* Cant. 5. 4. *put in his hand by the hole of the door, and my bowels were moved.* This speaks acquaintance when the soul can say, *I know his very touch ;* the least impression from him, I can distinguish it from thousands of objects that daily beat upon my heart.

To understand his looks ; to know the meaning of his aspects, and glances of the various casts, as it were of his eye. Such things intimate friends can, in a sort, talk by, with one another ; *I will guide thee by mine eye ;* that implies an intelligent teachable subject. We have now no full-ey'd appearances of God ; he shews himself, looks in upon us through the lattice, through a veil, or a shadow, or a glass. That measure of acquaintance with him to be able to discern and own him in

So we apprehend God proportionably more clearly as the Idea we have of a person is more distinct that we have of him by the sight of his picture or face through a glass, beyond that which we have by hearing a reported description of him, though by himself unseen. This is acquaintance with God.

his appearances, is a great participation of Heaven, Utter unacquaintance with God is express'd by the denial of these two, *ye have neither heard his voice, nor seen his shape,* Joh. 5.

Finally, which brings us home to the Text, *to keep our eye intently fixed on him*, not to understand *his* looks only as before, but to return our own. Intimate acquaintance (when such friends meet) is much express'd, and improv'd by the eye, by a reciprocation of glances, or (which speaks more inwardness) more fixed views; when their eyes do even feed and feast upon each other. Thus we should endeavour to be as in a continual interview with God.

How frequent mention have we of the fixed posture of *his* eye towards Saints. *To this man will I look*; I have found out, *q. d.* that which shall be ever the delight of mine eye, do not divert me. Towards him I *will* look. What he speaks of the material Temple is ultimately to be referr'd to that which is typified, *his Church, his Saints*, united with his Christ, *Mine eyes and my heart shall be there perpetually*; and elsewhere, *He with-draweth not his eyes from the righteous*; he cannot (admirable Grace) allow himself to look off, to turn aside his eye: And he seems impatient of the aversion of theirs, *Let me see thy countenance* (saith he) *for it is comely.*

Is it not much more reasonable, it should be thus with us towards him? that we should be more delighted to behold real comeliness

Cc

than

1 King 9.3:
Job 36.7:
Psal. 33.18.
& 34. 15.

Cant. 2.14.

Pfal. 16.8.

Pfal. 25.

than he with what is so, only by his gracious vouchsafement and estimation? How careful should we be, that our eye may at every turn meet his; that he never look towards us, and find it in the ends of the earth, carelessly wandring from him? How well doth it become us, to *set the Lord always before us*; to have *our eye ever towards the Lord*?

1 Joh. 5.

19, 20.

This you see is the initial leading-thing in this blessedness of Heaven. So it must have also a prime ingrediency into our heaven on earth. It is a part of celestial blessedness; but it is not *peculiar* to it. The present blessedness the righteous enjoy here is a participation of Heaven. It hath something in it of every thing that is ingredient into that *perfect blessedness*. Our present knowledg of God is often exprest by *vision*, or sight, as we have had occasion to observe in many passages of Scripture. He hath given us such a vivive power, and made it connatural to that heavenly creature, begotten of him; in all the true subjects of this blessedness. *We know that we are of God*, and presently it follows, *he hath given us an understanding to know him that is true*. This new-man is not born blind. The blessed God himself is become liable to the view of his regenerate intellectual eye, clarifi'd, and fill'd with vigor and spirit from himself. He therefore that hath made (that hath new-formed) this eye, shall not he be seen by it? shall not we turn it upon him? Why do not we more
fre-

frequently bless our eye with that sight? This Object (though of so high excellency and glory) will not hurt, but perfect and strengthen it. They are refreshing vital beams that issue from it. Sure we have no excuse that we eye God so little, *i. e.* that we mind him no more. Why have we so few thoughts of him in a day? What, to let so much time pass, and not spare him a look, a thought? Do we intend to employ our selves an eternity in the visions of God, and is our present aversion from him, and intention upon vanity, our best preparation thereto? This loudly calls for redress. Shall God be waiting all the day, as on purpose to catch our eye, to intercept a look, and we studiously decline him, and still look another way, as of choice? and what is it but choice? Can we pretend a necessity to forget him all the day? How cheap is the expence of a look? How little would it cost us? And yet how much of duty might it express? how much of comfort and joy might it bring into us?

How great is our offence and loss, that we live not in such more constant views of God? Herein we sin and suffer both at once, (things both very unsuitable to Heaven). Mindfulness of God is the living Spring of all holy and pleasant affections and deportments towards him; sets all the wheels agoing; makes the Souls as the Chariots of *Ami-nadab*. These wheels have their eyes also, are guided by a mind, by an intellectual principle. Knowing intelligent beings (as we

Joh. 3.11.

also are by participation and according to our measure) so act mutually towards one another. We cannot move towards God but with an *open eye*, seeing him and our way towards him. If we close our eyes we stand still, or blindly run another course, we know not whither. All sin is darkness, whether it be *neglect of good*, or *doing of evil*: Its way is a way of darkness; as a course of holy motion is *walking in the light*. Our shutting our eyes towards God creates that darkness; surrounds us with a darkness comprehensive of all sin. Now is every thing of enjoined duty waved, and any evil done, that sinful nature prompts us to. Well might it be said, *He that sinneth hath not seen God*. When we have made our selves this darkness, we fall of course under Satans Empire, and are presently within his Dominions. He is the Prince of darkness, and can rule us now at his will. Perishing lost Souls are such as *in whom the God of this world hath blinded their minds*.—To open their eyes, and turn them from darkness to light, is, to turn them also from the power of Satan unto God. What an hell of wickedness are we brought into, in the twinkling of an eye? We are without God in the world, as if a man wink, though at noon-day, he hath as it were put out the Sun, 'tis with him as if there were no such thing. When we have banished God out of our sight and forgotten him, 'tis with us as if there were *no God*. If such a state grow habitual to us, (as we know every sinful
aversion

aversion of our eye from God tends thereto), what wickedness is there that will not lurk in this darkness? How often in Scripture is *forgetting God* used as a *character*, yea, as a *paraphrase*, a full (though summary) expression of sin in general? As if the wickedness, the malignity, the very hell it self of *sin*, were wholly included (and not connoted only) here. Now consider this (after so dreadful an enumeration, so black a Catalogue) *all that forget God*. And (as deep calleth to deep, one hell to another), *The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the people that forget God*. That heap, that mass of wickedness, of pride, of persecution, cursing, blasphemy, deceit, and mischief, *all meet in one that hath not God in all his thoughts*. Psal. 50ⁱ
Psal. 9.

But who is so hardy to look the holy God in the face, and sin against him? What an astonishment it is, when he watches over *present sin*, or brings forth *former sins* out of secret darkness, and sets them in the light of his countenance? Who, that understands any thing of the Nature and Majesty of God, dare call him for a witness of his sinning? The worst of men would find themselves under some restraint, could they but obtain of themselves, to sit down sometimes, and *solemnly think of God*. Much more would it prove an advantage to (them whom I most intend) such as sin within the nearer call and reach of mercy; that sin not to the utmost latitude: Even such as lead the strictest lives, and are seldomer found to transgress;

are not their sins wont to begin with *forgetting God*? Did they eye God more, would they not sin less frequently, and with greater regret? You his Saints, that have *made a Covenant with him by Sacrifice*, that profess the greatest love and devotedness to him, and seem willing your selves to become Sacrifices, and lay down your lives for his sake; What, is it a harder thing to give him a look, a thought? or is it not too common a thing, without necessity (and then not without injury) to withhold these from him? Let us bethink our selves, are not the principal distempers of our spirits, and disorders yet observable in our lives to be referr'd hither? As to *enjoyed services*; what, should we venture on omissions, if we had God in our eye? or serve him with so declining backward hearts? Should we dare to let pass a day, in the Even whereof we might write down, *nothing done for God this day*? Or should we serve him as an hard Master, with sluggish despondent spirits? The Apostle forbids servants to serve with eye-service, as men-pleasers; meaning, they should eye men less, and God more. Sure, as to *him*, our service is not enough *eye-service*. We probably eye men more than we should; but we do not eye Him enough. Hence such hanging of hands, such feebleness of knees, such laziness and indifference, so little of an active zeal and laborious diligence, so little *feruency of spirit in serving the Lord*. Hence also such an aversion to hazardous services, such fear of attempting

tempting any thing (though never so apparent important duty) that may prove costly, or hath danger in it. *We look not to him that is invisible.*

And as to *forbidden things*; should we be so proud, so passionate, so earthly, so sensual, if we had God more in view? Should we so much seek our selves, and indulge our own wills and humors, drive a design with such solicitude and intention of mind, for our private interests? should we walk at such a latitude, and more consult our own inclination than our rule, allow our selves in so much vanity of conversation, did we mind God as we ought?

And do not we sensibly punish our selves in this neglect? what a dismal Chaos is this world while we see not God in it! To live destitute of a divine presence, to discern no beam of the heavenly glory; to go up and down day by day, and perceive nothing of God, no glimmering, no appearance; This is *disconsolate* as well as *sinful* darkness. What can we make of Creatures, what of the daily events of Providence, if we see not in them the glory of a Deity; if we do not contemplate and adore the divine wisdom, power, and goodness, diffused every-where. Our practical Atheism, and inobservance of God, makes the World become to us the *region and shadow of death*, states us as among Ghosts and Spectres, makes all things look with a ghastly face, imprints death upon every thing we see, encircles us with gloomy dreadful

shades, and with uncomfortable apparitions. To behold the tragical Spectacles always in view, the violent lusts, the rapine and rage of some, the calamitous sufferings, the miseries and ruins of others; to hear every corner resounding with the insultations of the Oppressor, and the mournful groans of the oppressed, What a painful continuing death were it to be in the world *without God!* At the best, all things were but a *vanishing scheme*, an image seen in the dark. The Creation, a thing, the fashion whereof were passing away, the whole Contexture and System of Providence were meer confusion, without the least concinnity or order. Religion an acknowledged trifle, a meer mockery? What, to *wink* our selves into so much darkness and desolation? And by sealing up our eyes against the divine light and glory, to confirm so formidable miseries upon our own Souls? How dreadfully shall we herein revenge our own folly, in nullifying him to our selves, *who is the All in All?* Sure there is little of Heaven in all this?

But if now we open our eyes upon that all-comprehending glory, apply them to a steady intuition of God, How heavenly a life shall we then live in the world! To have God always in view, as the Director and end of all our actions: To make our eye crave leave of God, to consult him ere we adventure upon any thing, and implore his guidance and blessing: Upon all occasions to direct our prayers to him and *look up*: To make
our

our eye await his commanding look, ready to receive all intimations of his will; this is an angelical life. To be as those Ministers of his that are always ready to do his pleasure: To make our eye do him homage, and express our dependence and trust: To approve our selves in every thing to him, and act as always in his presence, observing still how his eye observes us, and exposing our selves willingly to its inspection and search, contented always he should see through and through us: Surely there is much of Heaven in this life: So we should endeavour to live here.

(I cannot omit to give you this instruction in the words of an Heathen), "We ought
 " (saith he) so to live, as always within
 " view, order our cogitations as if some one
 " might or can look into the very inwards
 " of our breast. For to what purpose is it,
 " to hide any thing from man? from God
 " nothing can be hid; he is continually pre-
 " sent to our spirits, and comes amidst our
 " inmost thoughts, &c.

*Sic certe
vivendum
est tan-
quam in
conspetu
divinus,
Ec. Sen.
Epist. 83.*

This is *to walk in the light*, amidst a serene placid mild light, that infuses no unquiet thoughts, admits no guilty fears, nothing that can disturb or annoy us.

To eye God in all our comforts, and observe the smiling aspects of his face, when he dispenses them to us.

To eye Him in all our afflictions, and consider the paternal wisdom that instructs us in them; how would this increase our mercies, and mitigate our troubles?

To

Isa. 6. 2, 3.

To eye Him in all his Creatures, and observe the various prints of the Creators glory stamp't upon them; with how lively a lustre would it cloath the world, and make every thing look with a pleasant face! what an heaven were it to look upon God, as filling all in all; and how sweetly would it, ere-while, raise our Souls into some such sweet seraphick strains, *holy, holy,—the whole earth is full of his glory.*

To eye Him in his Providences, and consider how all events are with infinite wisdom disposed into an apt subserviency to his holy Will and Ends. What difficulties would hence be solved? What seeming inconsistencies reconcil'd? And how much would it contribute to the ease and quiet of our minds?

To eye Him in his Christ, the express Image of his person, the brightness of his glory, and in the Christian Oeconomy, the Gospel-revelation and Ordinances, through which he manifests himself.

To behold Him in the posture wherein he saves Souls, *clad with the garments of Salvation*, girt with power, and apparell'd with love, travelling in the greatness of his strength, *mighty to save.*

To view Him addressing himself to allure and win to him the hearts of sinners, when he discovers himself in Christ, upon that reconciling design, makes *grace that brings salvation appear, teaching to deny ungodliness, &c.*

To

To behold Him entering into human flesh, pitching his Tabernacle among men, hanging out his Ensigns of peace, laying his trains, spreading his net, *the cords of a man, the bands of love.*

To see Him in his Christ, ascending the Cross, lifted up to draw all men to him; and consider that mighty love of *Justice* and of *Souls*, both so eminently conspicuous in that stupendous Sacrifice. Here to fix our eyes looking to Jesus, and behold him whom we have pierced.

To see His power and glory, as they are wont to be seen in his sanctuaries; to observe him in the solemnities of his worship, and the graceful postures wherein he holds communion with his Saints, when he seats himself amidst them on the Throne of grace, receives their addresses, dispenses the tokens and pledges of his love. Into what transports might these visions put us every day!

Let us then stir up our drowsie Souls, open our heavy eyes, and turn them upon God, inure and habituate them to a constant view of his (yet veiled) face, that we may not see him only by *casual glances*, but as those that *seek his face*, and make it our business to gain a thorough knowledg of him.

But let us remember, that all our present Visions of God must aim at a further Conformity to him; they must design *imitation*, not the *satisfying of curiosity*; our looking must not therefore be an inquisitive busie prying into the unrevealed things of God.
Care-

Carefully abstain from such over-bold presumptuous looks. But remember, we are to eye God as our *pattern*. Wherein he is to be so, he hath plainly enough reveal'd and propos'd himself to us. And consider, this is the pattern, both to which we *ought*, and to which we *shall* be conformed (if we make it our business); so will *sense of duty*, and *hope of success* concur to fix our eye and keep it steady.

Especially, Let us endeavour to manage and guide our eye aright, in beholding him, that our sight of him may most effectually subserve this design of being *like him*; and herein nothing will be more conducive, than that our looks be qualified with

} *Reverence*, and
} *Love*.

1. Let them be *reverential* looks. We shall never be careful to imitate a despised pattern, or that we think meanly of: When this is the intimate sense of our soul, *Who is a God like unto thee in holiness! There is none holy as the Lord*: This will set our powers on work; such sights will command and over-awe our souls into conformity to him. Subjects have sometimes affected to imitate the very imperfections and deformities of their *adored Prince*. Let us greatness our thoughts of God. Look to him with a submissive adoring eye. Let every look import worship and subjection. Who can stand before

before apprehended *sovereign Majesty* with such a temper of soul as shall signify an affront to it? This will make every thing in us suitable to God, yield and render our souls susceptible of all divine and holy impressions.

2. Let them be *friendly* and (as far as may consist with that reverence) *amorous* looks. 'Tis natural to affect and endeavour likeness to them we love. Let *love* always sit in our eye, and inspire it; this will represent God always amiable, will infinitely commend us to his nature and attributes, and even ravish us into his likeness. The loving Spouse often glories, to wear her beloved Husbands picture on her breast. The love of God will much more make us affect to bear his image in our hearts. His Law is a true representation of him, and *Love* is the fulfilling of that Law, an exemplification of it in our selves. Love will never enter a quarrel, nor admit of any disagreement with God. His more terrible appearances will be commendable in the eye of Love. It thinks no evil. But so interprets and comments upon his severer aspects, whether through his Law or Providence, as to judge all amiable, and frame the soul to an answerable deportment.

2. In this way then *let us endeavour a growing conformity unto God*. It hath been much (and not unnecessarily) inculcated already, that the blessedness of the righteous hereafter, doth not consist meerly in behold-

beholding an external objective glory, but in *being also glorified*. They are happy by a participated glory; by being made like God, as well as *seeing his glorious likeness*; whereby the constitution of their Spirits is changed and reduced to that excellent harmonious agreeable temper, that holy composure and peaceful state from which blessedness is inseparable.

As far as we are capable of blessedness in this world, it must be so with us *here*. Glory without us will not make us happy in Heaven; much less will any thing without us make us happy on earth. 'Tis an idle dream; of sickly crazy minds, that their blessedness consists in some *external good*, that is separable and distant from them; which therefore as they blindly guess, they uncertainly pursue; never aiming to *become good*, without which they can never know what it is to be blessed. What felicity are men wont to imagine to themselves in this or that change of their outward condition; were their state such or such, then they were happy, and should desire no more? As the child's phantasie suggests to it, if it were on the top of such a Hill, it could touch the Heavens, but when with much toil it hath got thither, it finds it self as far off as before. We have a shorter and more compendious way to it, would we allow our selves to understand it. *A right temper of mind* involves blessedness in it self: 'Tis this only *change* we need to endeavour. We wear out our
days

days in vanity and misery, while we neglect this work, and busie our selves to catch a fugitive shadow, that hovers about us. It can never be well, till our own Souls be an Heaven to us, and blessedness be a domestick, an home-dwelling inhabitant there. 'Till we get a settled principle of holy quietude into our own breasts, and become the sons of peace, with whom the peace of God may find entrance and *abode*: Till we have that treasure within us, that may render us insensible of any dependence on a foreign good, or fear of a foreign evil. Shall that be the boast and glory of a Philosopher only, *I carry all my goods with me where-ever I go?*

And that a vertuous good man is liable to no hurt? "*Seneca* thinks they discover a low

Epist. 92.

"Spirit, that say, externals can add any thing (though but a very little) to the felicity of an honest mind ; as if (saith he) "men could not be content with the light of the Sun without the help of a candle or "a spark? And speaking of *the constancy of the vertuous man*, (saith he) "They do ill that "say, such an evil is tolerable to him, such "a one intolerable, and that confine the "greatness of his mind within certain bounds "and limits. Adversity (he tells us) over- "comes us, if it be not wholly overcome. "*Epicurus* (saith he) the very patron of your "sloth acknowledges yet, that unhappy e- "vents can *seldom* disturb the mind of a "vertuous person, (and he adds), how "had he *almost* uttered the voice of a *man*!

"I pray,

Max. Tyr.
dissert. 2.
who adds,
For a
good man
cannot re-
ceive de-
triment
from an
evil man.

Diogen:
Laert.
Anaxar-
chus.

Non præ-
stat fides
quod præ-
stitit infi-
delitas.

* As this
Authors
expressi-
on is.

"I pray, (saith he), I speak out a little more
"boldly, and say he is above them altoge-
"ther. Such apprehensions the more ver-
tuous Heathens have had of the efficacy and
defensative power of Moral goodness, (how-
ever defective their notion might be of the
thing it self): Hence *Socrates* the *Pagan*
Martyr is reported to have cryed out, (when
those persons were persecuting him to death),
Anytus and *Meletus* can kill me, but they
cannot hurt me. And *Anaxarchus* the Phi-
losopher, having sharply reprov'd *Nicocreon*,
and being by him ordered to be beaten to death
with iron Mallets, bids, *strike on, strike on*,
thou may'st (saith he) break in pieces this ves-
sel of *Anaxarchus*, but *Anaxarchus* himself thou
canst not touch.

Shall Christianity here confess it self out-
vy'd? shall we, to the reproach of our Reli-
gion, yield the day to *Pagan-morality*, and
renew the occasion of the ancient complaint,
That the Faith of Christians is out-done by the
Heathen Infidelity? It is, I remember, the
challenge of *Cecilius* in *Minucius*. "There is
"*Socrates* (saith he) the Prince of Wisdom,
"whosoever of you Christians is great enough
"to attempt it, let him imitate him if he can.
Methinks we should be ambitious to tell the
world in our lives, (for Christians should
live great things, not speak * them), That
a greater than *Socrates* is here: To let them
see in us our *represented pattern*: To shew
forth higher vertues than those of *Socrates*;
even

even *his*, who hath called us out of darkness into his glorious and marvellous light.

Certain it is, that the Sacred Oracles of the Gospel set before us a more excellent pattern, and speak things not less magnificent, but much more modest and perspicuous: With less pomp of words they give us a much clearer account of a far more excellent temper of mind, and prescribe the direct and certain way of attaining it. (Do but view over the many passages of Scripture occasionally glanc'd at, *Chap. 7.*)

But we grope as in the dark for blessedness; we stumble at noon-day as in the night, and wander as if we had no eyes; we mistake our business, and lay the Scene of an happy state at a great distance from us, in things which we cannot reach, and which if we could it were to little purpose.

Not to speak of greater Sensualists, (whom at present I have less in my eye), Is there not a more refined sort of persons, that neglecting the great business of inspecting, and labouring to better and improve their spirits, are wholly taken up about the affairs of another Sphere, that are more solicitous for *better times*, for a *better world* than *better spirits*; that seem to think if the happiness they are capable of on earth, is bound up in this or that external state of things? Not that the care of all publick concerns should be laid aside; least of all, a just solicitude for the Churches welfare: But that should not be pretended, when our own interest

is the *one thing* with us. And when we are *really solicitous* about the Churches interests, we should state them aright. God designs the afflictions of his people for their spiritual good, therefore that is a much greater good than their exemption from suffering these evils; otherwise his means should eat up his end, and be more expensive than *that* will countervail; which were an imprudence no man of tolerable discretion would be guilty of. We should desire the outward prosperity of *Sion*, for it is a *real good*; but in as much as it hath in it the goodness, not of an *end*, but only (and that but sometimes neither) of a *means*; not a constant but a mutual goodness; not a principal, but a lesser subordinate goodness; we must not desire it *absolutely*, nor *chiefly*, but with submissive limited desires. If our hearts are grieved to hear of the *sufferings* of the Church of God in the world, but not of their *sins*; If we more sensibly regret at any time, the persecutions and oppressions they undergo, than their spiritual distempers, their earthliness, pride, cold love to God, fervent animosities towards each other; It speaks an uninstructed carnal mind. We take no right measure of ~~the~~ interests of Religion, or the Churches welfare, and do most probably mistake our selves as much in our judging of our own; and measure theirs by our own mistaken model.

And this is the mischievous cheat many put upon their own Souls, and would obtrude

trude (too often) upon others too; that over-looking the great design of the Gospel, to transform mens spirits and change them into the Divine likeness, they think 'tis Religion enough to espouse a Party, and adopt an Opinion; and then vogue themselves friends to Religion according to the measure of their zeal for their own Party or Opinion; and give a very pregnant proof of that zeal, by magnifying or inveighing against the times, according as they favour or frown upon their empty unspirited Religion. It being indeed such (a secret consciousness whereof they herein bewray) as hath no other life in it, than what it owes to external favour and countenance. And therefore all publick rebukes are justly apprehended mortal to it; whereas that *substantial Religion* that adequately answers the design, and is animated by the Spirit of the Gospel, possesses the Souls of them that own it, with a secure confidence, that it can live in any times, and hold their Souls in life also. Hence they go on their way with a free unsolicitous cheerfulness, enjoying silently in their own bosoms, that repose and rest which *naturally* results from a sound and well-composed temper of spirit. They know their happiness depends upon nothing without them*. That they hold it by a better tenure than that of

* Ἰδιώτῃ
ἐκείνῃ καὶ
χαρᾷ
ἡσυχίᾳ, ἢ δὲ

πολλοὶ ἐξ ἐκείνῃ προσδοκᾷ ὠφέλειαν ἢ βλάβην, ἀλλ' ὅπου ἡ
λαοσύνη ἐκείνη καὶ χαρᾷ καὶ ἡσυχίᾳ, πᾶσαν ὠφέλειαν καὶ βλάβην ἐξ ἐκείνης
προσδοκᾷ. Εἰρήν.

the Worlds courtesie. They can be quiet in the midst of storms, and abound in the want of all things. They can *in patience possess their own Souls*, and in them a vital spring of true pleasure, when they are driven out of all other possessions. They know the living sense of these words, That *the good man is satisfied from himself*: That *to be spiritually-minded is life and peace*: That *nothing can harm them that are followers of the good*: That *the way to see good days, is to keep their tongue from evil, and their lips from speaking guile, to depart from evil and do good, to seek peace and pursue it.*

They cannot live in bad times; they carry that about them that will make the worst days good to them. Surely they can never be happy in the best times, that cannot be so in any. Outward prosperity is quite besides the purpose to a disordered Soul; when nothing else troubles, it will torment it self. Besides, we cannot command at pleasure the benign aspects of the world, the smiles of the times; we may wait a life's-time, and still find the same adverse posture of things towards us from without. What dotage is it to place our blessedness in something to us *impossible*, that lies wholly out of our power; and in order whereto we have nothing to *do*, but sit down and *wish*; and either *faintly hope*, or *ragingly despair*? We cannot change times and seasons, nor alter the course of the World, create new Heavens and new Earth. Would we
not

not think our selves mock'd, if God should command us these things in order to our being happy? 'Tis not our business, these are not the affairs of our own Province (blessed be God 'tis not so large) further than as our bettering our selves may conduce thereto; and this is that which we may do and ought, 'tis our proper work, in obedience and subordination to God as his instruments, to govern and cultivate our own spirits, to intend the affairs of that his Kingdom in us (where we are his Authorized Vice-Roys), that consists *in righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost*. We can be benign to our selves, if the world be not so to us; cherish and adorn our inward man; that though the *outward man* be exposed daily to perish (which we cannot help, and therefore it concerns us not to take thought about it), the *inward* may be renewed day by day. We can take care that our Souls may prosper, that through our oscitant neglect they be not left to languish and pine away in their own iniquities. They may be daily fed with the Heavenly hidden *Manna*, and with the Fruits of the Paradise of God; they may enjoy at home a continual feast, and with an holy freedom luxuriate in Divine Pleasures, the joys wherewith the strangers intermeddle not, if we be not unpropitious and unkind to our selves.

And would we know wherein that sound and happy complexion of spirit lies, that hath so much of Heaven in it: 'Tis a pre-

* Denique
ut breviter
tibi for-
mulam
scribam;
talis ani-
mus sapi-
entis vivi
esse debet
qualis De-
um deceat.
Sen. Epist.
* Rom. 12.
2.

sent gradual participation of the divine like-
ness. It consists in being conformed to God;
'tis (as the Moralists tell us) * If one would
give a short compendious Model of it, *Such*
a temper of mind as becomes God; or to give
an account of it, *in his own words*, who pre-
scribes it, and who is himself the highest
Pattern of this blessed Frame, * 'Tis *to be*
transformed in the renewing of our minds, so
as to be able to prove what is the good, and per-
fect, and acceptable will of God; that is, ex-
perimentally to find it in our selves, impress
and wrought into our own spirits, so as to have
the complacential relish and savour of its
Goodness, Excellency and Pleasantness diffused
thorow our Souls. Where remember, this
was written to such as were supposed Saints;
whence it must be understood, of a continued
progressive transformation, *a renewing of the*
inward man day by day, (as is the Apostles ex-
pression elsewhere). 'Tis a more perfect re-
ception of the impress of God, revealing him-
self in the Gospel; the growth and tendency of
the New Creature, begotten unto the eternal
blessedness, towards its mature and most
perfect state and stature in the fruition there-
of.

And 'tis this I am now pressing; in as
much as some account hath been already
given (according as we can now imperfect-
ly guess at it, and spell it out), what the
constitution of the holy Soul is, in its glo-
rified state, when it perfectly partakes the
Divine likeness; that when we find in our
selves

selves any principles, and first elements of that blessed frame, we would endeavour the gradual improvement thereof, and be making towards that perfection. This therefore being our present work, let it be remembered wherein that participated likeness of God hath been said to consist; and labour now the nearest approach to that pitch and state. Your measures must be taken from what is most perfect, come now as near it as you can, and as that *Pagan's* advice *Epist.* is; "If yet thou art not *Socrates*, however live as one that would fain be *Socrates*. Though yet thou art not perfect, live as one that aims at it, and would be so.

Only it must be considered, *that the conformity to God, of our present state, is in extent larger and more comprehensive than that of our future*; though it be unspeakably less perfect in degree. For there is no Moral Excellency (that we have any present knowledge of) belonging to our glorified state, which is not in some degree, necessarily to be found in Saints on earth. But there are some things which the exigency of our present state makes necessary to us *here*, which will not be so in the state of glory; Repentance, Faith, as it respects the Mediator, in order to our future happiness; Patience of injuries, Pity to the distressed, &c. These things, and whatsoever else, whose objects cease, must be understood to cease with them. In short, *here*, is requisite all that Moral good which concerns both our *end*

and way; there, what concerns our end only.

Yet is the whole compass of that gracious frame of spirit, requisite in this our present state, all comprehended in *conformity to God*. Partly, in as much as some of these graces, which will cease hereafter, in their exercise, as not having objects to draw them forth into act, have their pattern in some communicable Attributes of God, which will cease also, as to their denomination and exercise; their objects then ceasing too, as his patience towards sinners, his mercy to the miserable. Partly, in as much as other of those graces now required in us, though they correspond to nothing in God that is capable of the same name, as *Faith in a Saviour*, Repentance of sin (which can have no place in God), they yet answer to something in this nature, that goes under other names; and is the reason wherefore he requires such things in us. He hath in his Nature that Faithfulness and All-sufficiency, that challenges our Faith; and that Hatred of sin, which challenges our Repentance for it, having been guilty of it. His very nature obliges him to require those things from us, the state of our case being considered. So that the sum even of our present duty lies in receiving this entire impression of the Divine likeness, (in some part invariably and eternally necessary to us, in some part necessary with respect to our present state). And herein is our present

sent blessedness also involved. If therefore we have any design to better our condition in point of blessedness, it must be our business to endeavour after a fuller participation of all that likeness, in all the particulars it comprehends. You can pitch your thoughts upon no part of it, which hath not an evident direct tendency to the repose and rest of your spirits. I shall commend only some few instances, that you may see how little reason or inducement a Soul conformed to the holy will of God, hath to seek its comforts and content else-where.

Faith corresponds to the *Truth* of God, as it respects Divine Revelations: How pleasant is it to give up our understandings to the conduct of so safe a guide; to the view of so admirable things as he reveals!

It corresponds to his goodness, as it respects his offers; How delectable is it to be filling an empty Soul from the Divine fulness! What pleasure attends the exercise of this Faith towards the Person of the Mediator, *viewing him* in all his Glorious Excellencies, receiving him in all his gracious Communications by this *Eye and Hand*.

How pleasant is it to exercise it in reference to *another world*! living by it in a *daily prospect of eternity*; in reference to *this world*, to live without care in a chearful dependence on him that hath undertaken to care for us!

Repentance is that by which we *become like* the holy God; to whom our sin hath made

us most unlike before. How sweet are kindly relentings, penitential tears, and the return of the Soul to its God, and to a right mind !

And who can conceive the Ravishing Pleasures of *Love to God* ! wherein we not only *imitate*, but intimately *unite* with him, who is *Love it self*. How pleasant to let our Souls dissolve here, and flow into the Ocean, the Element of Love !

Our *Fear* corresponds to his *Excellent Greatness*. And is not (as it is a part of the New Creature in us) a tormenting servile passion, but a due respectfulness and observance of God ; and there is no mean pleasure in that holy awful seriousness unto which it composes and forms our spirits.

Our *Humility*, as it respects *him*, answers *his high excellency* ; as it respects our own inferiors, *his gracious condescension*. How pleasant is it to fall before him ! And how connatural and agreeable to a good spirit, to stoop low, upon any occasion to do good !

Sincerity is a most God-like excellency ; an imitation of his *Truth*, as grounded in his All-sufficiency ; which sets him above the necessity or possibility of any advantage by collusion or deceit ; and corresponds to his Omnisciciency and heart-searching eye. It heightens a man's spirit to a holy and generous boldness ; makes him apprehend it beneath him to do an unworthy dishonest action, that should need a palliation, or a con-

concealment *. And gives him the continual pleasure of self-approbation to God, whom he chiefly studies and desires to please.

* As that Noble Roman whom his

Architect (about to build him an house) promised to contrive it free from all his neighbours inspection ; he replies, nay, if thou have any art in thee, build my house so that all may see what I do. *Vell. Pat. p. 32.*

Patience, a prime Glory of the Divine Majesty, continues a mans possession of his own Soul, his Liberty, his Dominion of himself. He is (if he can suffer nothing) a Slave to his vilest and most sordid passions *at home*, his own base fear, and brutish anger, and effeminate grief, and to any mans lusts and humours besides, that he apprehends can do him hurt. It keeps a mans Soul in a peaceful calm, delivers him from (that most unnatural) self-torment, defeats the impotent malice of his most implacable enemy, who fain would vex him, but cannot.

Justice, the Great Attribute of the Judge of all the Earth, as such ; so far as the impression of it takes place among men, preserves the Common Peace of the World, and the Private Peace of each man in his own bosom, so that the *former* be not disturbed by *doing* of mutual injuries, nor the *latter* by the conscience of *having done them*.

The Brotherly love of fellow-Christians ; the impression of that *special love*, which God bears to them all, admits them into one anothers bosoms, and to all the endearments and pleasures of a *mutual communion*.

Love

The Blessedness of the Righteous.

Love to enemies, the express image of our heavenly Father ; by which we appear his children, begotten of him ; overcomes evil by goodness, blunts the double edge of revenge ; at least, the sharper edge, (which is always towards the Author of it), secures our selves from wounding impressions and resentments ; turns keen anger into gentle pity ; and substitutes mild pleasant forgiveness, in the room of the much uneasier thoughts and study of retaliation.

Mercifulness toward the distressed, as our Father in Heaven is merciful, heaps blessings upon our Souls, and evidences our Title to what we are to live by, the Divine mercy.

An universal benignity and propension to do good to all ; in imitation of the immense diffusive goodness of God, is but kindness to our selves, rewards it self by that greater pleasure is in giving than in receiving ; and associates us with God in the blessedness of this work, as well as in the disposition to it ; who exercises loving kindness in the Earth, because He delighteth therein.

Here are some of (the *μυστήρια τῆς Θεότητος*, or) the things wherein consists that our conformity to the Divine Nature and Will, which is proper to our present state. And now, who can estimate the blessedness of such a Soul ? Can (in a word) the state of that Soul be unhappy that is full of the Holy Ghost, full of Love, Joy, Peace, Long-suffering,

suffering, Gentleness, Goodness, Faith, Meekness, Temperance, those blessed fruits of that blessed Spirit? Blessedness is connaturalized unto this Soul: Every thing doth its part, and all conspire to make it happy. This Soul is a Temple, an Habitation of Holiness. Here dwells a Deity in his Glory. 'Tis a Paradise, a Garden of God. Here he walks and converses daily, delighted with its fragrant fruitfulness. He that hath those things and aboundeth, is not barren or unfruitful in the knowledg of our Lord and Saviour Jesus: He is the Sun, and the knowledg of him, the quickening beams that cherish and ripen these fruits.

But the Soul that lacketh these things is a Desart, a Habitation of Devils. Here is stupid disconsolate infidelity, inflexible obstinacy and resolvedness for Hell, Hatred and contempt of the Sovereign Majesty; whom yet, its secret misgiving thoughts tell it, will be too hard for it at last. Here is swollen pride and giddy vain-glory, disguised hypocrisie and pining envy, raging wrath and ravenous avarice, with what you can imagine besides, leading to misery and desolation.

You have then some prospect of a happy temper of spirit. It can now be no difficulty to you, to frame an Idea of it in your thoughts, to get a *notional image* (or this likeness in the notion of it) into your minds; but that will avail you little, if you have not the *real image* also; that is, your spirits

Philosophia hæc dividitur in Scientiam, & habitum animi.

unam illam qui didicit & facienda ac vitanda præcepit nondum sapiens est, nisi in ea quæ didicit animus ejus transfiguratus est.
Sen. (ex Agrippâ) Ep. 94.

rits really fashioned and formed according thereto: If having the knowledg of these things (as the Pagan Moralist's expression before-mentioned is of vertuous Rules and Precepts) they become not *habitual to you, and your spirits be not transfigured in them.*

But now, I treat with such as are supposed to have some such real impressions, that they may be stirr'd up to endeavour a further perfecting of them. In order whereto, I shall add but this two-fold advice:

I.

1. Be very careful that this *living Image* (such you have been formerly told it is) may *grow equally* in every part. See that the impression of this likeness be *entire*, that it be not a maimed thing; if it be, God will never own it as his production. *Integrity* is the glory of a Christian: To be *entire, lacking nothing*. This is the *soundness* of heart that excludes a blushing consciousness and misgiving; exempts it from the fear of a *shameful discovery*. *Let my heart be sound in thy statutes*; is paraphrased, *by having respect to all Gods commandments*; to which is opposite, that being *partial in the Law*, spoken of by the Prophet by way of complaint concerning the Priests of that time. A thing hateful in the eye of God, and as uncomfortable to our selves, as to be without a Leg or an Arm.

Psal. 119.
6, 80.

Mal. 2. 9.

*

And

And see that it be preserved entire by a *proportional* and *uniform growth*, that fresh life and motion may daily appear in every Limb of this heavenly new Creature. How odious a deformity is it, when a *shew of Moral Vertues* excludes *Godliness*? And how much more odious (in as much as there is more impudent falsehood in it, and more of dishonourable reflection upon God) when under an high pretence of *Godliness*, any shall allow themselves in visible *Immorality*? What, to be oppressive, envious, contentious, deceitful, proud, turbulent, wrathful, morose, malicious, fretful, and peevish, and yet a Christian? What serious person, that shall have no fairer representation of Christianity than such do give, would not be ready to say rather, *Sit anima mea cum Philosophis*, If this be Christian Religion, give me honest Paganism? A Christian that hath received the proper, uniform, entire impress of the Gospel of Christ, is the most meek, mild, calm, harmless, quiet thing in the world. Never mention so venerable a Name, if you will not be very jealous of the Honour of it. Will you give God occasion to charge you, *Wretch, I never had had this dishonour, if thou hadst never been call'd a Christian; thou art a Christian to no purpose, or to very bad; it does thee no good, and it injures me?*

But (which is more directly considerable as to our present purpose) the neglect and consequent decay of any gracious principle, infers a *languor*, a consumption and enfeeblement

ment of all. Any such perverse disposition doth not affect that part only, is not only an impairment to the contrary gracious principle, but (as a Cancer in some exterior part of the body) it gradually creeps up till it invade the vitals. Can the love of God live and grow in an unquiet, angry, uncharitable breast? Consider, *Jam. 1. 26. 1 Joh. 3. 17.*

2. 2. Be constantly intent upon this business of *spiritual growth*. Mind it as a design, make a solemn purposed business of it, your great daily business: You do not Till your Ground by chance, as a casual thing; but you do it industriously, and of set purpose. The Apostle speaking of his own method of pursuing conformity to Christ, tells us, he did in comparison, count all things else loss and dogs meat; he threw every thing else aside. Then next he recounts with himself, *how far short he was; Not as if I had already attained, &c.* (where by the way he intimates, that to stand still, and give over further endeavours, implies that gross absurdity, as if we thought our selves to have attained already, to be already perfect; are we not ashamed to seem so conceited of our selves)? and then *still as he did attain in this pursuit he forgot what was behind*; and held on his course with fresh and constant vigor, still reaching forth and pressing on-ward towards his designed mark.

In this great business we (alas) seem to dream. He that hath been observed ten or twenty years ago to be proud, and covetous,

*

or

or passionate, still remains so, and we apprehend not the incongruity of it. What, always learning, and yet never come to the knowledge of the truth, as it is in Jesus, to the putting off the old man, and putting on the new? Who would meddle with any profession upon such terms, to be always doing and yet to do nothing? Surely it must be imputed to this, we design not, we do not seriously intend the perfecting of holiness, to make a real progress in our way and work, and to get still nearer Heaven, as we draw nearer to the end of our days on Earth. We too contentedly confine our selves within certain limits, and aim not, as we should, at a spiritual excellency. This is the temper of many that have long trodden the path of (at least an external) Religion; they will go but their own pace, and that within a self-prescribed round or circle. They perform their stated task of Religious exercises, and shun the grosser Vices of the time; and resolve never to go higher: Much like the Character that was once given of a great man *, that *he followed not the more eminent virtues, and yet that he hated vice.* And 'tis a true censure that a *Barbarian* * is said to have given of that middle temper, that dull indifferency: What is equally distant from being the matter either of Praise or Punishment, is upon no terms to be accounted a Virtue.

*Tiberius.
Neque enim
eminentes
virtutes
sectabatur,
& rursum
vitia ode-
rat. Tacit.
Annal.
*Thespis-
on.

Πάν γὰρ
ὁ τιμῶν
τὸ καὶ τι-
μωρὸς

ἵστον ἀφ' ἑσῆς καὶ ἑπὶ ἀφ' ἑσῆς. Philostr. in vit. Apollon. Tyan.

Ec

At

Gen. 49.4.

At least, we drive not on a design of growth and self-improvement in our spiritual states with that constancy we ought; we are off and on; our spirits are not steadily intent; *We are unstable as water; how can we excel?* God hath not put us, sure, upon so fruitless a task, wherein our utmost labour and diligence shall profit nothing. Therefore strive more vigorously, and pray with more earnest importunity. Consider and plead it with God, that he hath set before thee the hope of such a state, wherein thou art to be perfectly like him; and shalt thou (that must hereafter be like God) be now like a clod of earth? Thou art now a Child begotten of him; and though thou art yet in the minority, yet may not somewhat be spared out of so fair an estate, hereafter designed for thee, as that thou may'st now live worthy of such a Father, and suitable to thy expected inheritance?

3:

3. And now, a contented satisfied temper of spirit, as I have told you, results from the other two; and will therefore follow of course upon growing knowledge of God, and conformity to Him, as the latter of these also doth upon the former. Yea, 'tis a part of our conformity to God; but a part consequent to the impression of the things mentioned under the former head, (as knowledge also is a part previous and antecedent thereto). 'Tis in the state of glory, we see, something superadded. The *likeness* imprest is presupposed; *Satisfaction* follows thereupon.
The

The case is so too in our present state; Contentment is spoken of as a thing consequent and superadded; *Godliness* with *Contentment*: A satisfied contented spirit, when 'tis the result of Godliness, (of the divine image imprest), is indeed great gain. Yet as to this I shall only say these two things.

1. Be distinct and explicite in the proposal of it as an end. Religion doth not brutifie men, but make them more rational. Its business is to guide them to blessedness! It must therefore pitch their eyes upon it, as the mark and end they are to aim at, and hold them intent there. 'Tis ingenuous, and honourable to God, that we should expressly avow it. We come to him for satisfaction to our spirits, not knowing whither else to apply our selves. We turn our eyes upon Him, we lay open our Souls to receive impressions from Him, for this very end. This is an explicite acknowledgment of Him as God, our highest Sovereign good.

2. Actually apply and accommodate Divine Visions and Communications to this purpose. Say, "O my Soul, now come follow thy self in this appearance of God; come, take thy allowed pleasure in such exertions of God; as thou dost now experience in thy self. Recount thy happiness; think how great it is, how rich thou art; on purpose that thy spirit may grow more daily into a satisfied contented frame. Often bethink thy self, *What is the great God doing for me, that he thus reveals and imparts himself*

himself to my Soul ! O how great things do those present pledges presignifie to me ! That thou may'st still more and more like thy portion, and account it fain in pleasant places, so as never to seek satisfaction in things of another kind ; though thou must still continue expecting and desiring more of the same kind.

And remember to this purpose, there cannot be a greater participation of the misery of Hell before-hand, than a *discontented spirit perpetually restless and weary of it self* ; nor of the blessedness of Heaven, than in a *well-pleased, satisfied, contented frame of spirit.*

CHAP.

C H A P. XIX.

Rule 5. *Directing to raise our Desires above the actual or possible attainments of this our present, and terminate them upon the future consummate state of Blessedness. The Rule explained and pressed by sundry Considerations.*

Rule 6. *That we add to a desirous Pursuit, a joyful Expectation of this Blessedness: Which is pursued in certain subordinate Directions.*

5. **T**hat notwithstanding all our present or possible attainments in this imperfect state on earth, We direct fervent vigorous desires towards the perfect and consummate state of glory it self; Not designing to our selves a plenary satisfaction and rest in any thing on this side of it. 5 Rule.

That is, That forgetting what is behind, we reach forth not only to what is immediately before us, the next step to be taken; but that our eye and desire aim forward at the ultimate period of our race, terminate upon the eternal glory it self; and that not only as a *measure*, according to which we

would some way *proportion our present attainments*, but as the very *mark, which (it self) we would fain hit and reach home to.*

And that this be not only the *habitual bent and tendency of our spirits*; but that we keep up such desires, in *frequent (and as much as is possible) continual exercise.*

Yea, and that such actual desires be not only faint and sluggish wishes, but full of lively efficacy and vigour; in some measure proportionable to our last end and highest good; beyond and above which we neither *esteem nor expect* any other enjoyment.

Whatsoever we may possibly attain to here, we should still be far from projecting to our selves a state of *rest* on this side *consummate glory*, but still urge our selves to a continual assent; so as to mount above, not only all enjoyments of any other kind, but all degrees of enjoyment in this kind, that are beneath perfection.

Still it must be remembred, this is not the state of our final rest. The Mass of Glory is yet in reserve, we are not yet so high as the highest Heavens.

If we gain but the top of Mount *Tabor*, we are apt to say, *'tis good to be here*, and forget the longer journey yet before us, loth to think of a further advance; when, were our spirits right, how far so ever we may suppose our selves to have attained, it would be matter of continual joy to us to think, high perfections are still attainable; that we are yet capable of greater things,
than

than what we have hitherto compass; our Souls can yet comprehend more. Nature intends what is most perfect in every Creature; methinks the Divine Nature in the new Creature, should not design lower, or cease aspiring, till it have attained its ultimate perfection, its culminating point; till Grace turn into Glory.

Let us therefore, Christians, bestir our selves, let us open and turn our eyes upon the *eternal glory*. Let's view it well, and then demand of our own Souls, Why are our desires so faint and slothful? Why do they so seldom pierce through the intervening distance, and reach home to what they professedly level at; so rarely touch this blessed mark? How can we forbear to be angry with our selves, that so glorious an end should not more powerfully attract; that our hearts should not more sensibly find themselves drawn; and all the powers of the Soul be set on work by the attractive power of that glory?

It certainly concerns us, not to sit still under so manifest a distemper. But if the *proposal* of the object, the *discourse* (all this while) of this blessed state, do not move us to make some further trials with our selves, see what urging and reasoning with our Souls, what rubbing and chafing our hearts will do. And there is a two-fold trial we may in this kind make upon our spirits: What the sense of *Shame* will work with us; whether our hearts cannot be made sensible

to suppose how *vile* and wretched a temper it is to be *undesirous of glory*. And then what sense of *Praise* can effect; or what impression it may make upon us to consider the *excellency* and worth, the high reasonableness of that temper and posture of Soul, which I am now perswading to [*a continual desirousness of that blessed glorious state*].

1.

1. As to the former: Let us bethink our selves, can we answer it to God or to our own Souls, that we should indulge our selves in a continual negligence of our eternal blessedness? A blessedness consisting in the Vision and Participation of the Divine Glory?

Have we been dreaming all this while, that God hath been revealing to us this glorious state, and setting this lovely prospect before our eyes? Did it become us, not to open our eyes while he was opening Heaven to us, and representing the state which he designed to bring us to? Or will we say, we have seen it and yet desire it not? Have we been deaf and dead while he hath been calling us into eternal glory? have all our senses been bound up all this while? Hath he been speaking all along to senseless Statues, to Stocks and Stones, while he expected reasonable living Souls should have received the voice, and have returned an obedient complying answer? And what answer could be expected to such a call (a call to his Glory) below this, *We desire it Lord, we would fain be there.*

And if we say we have not been all this while

while asleep, we saw the light that shone upon us, we heard the voice that called to us; Wherewith shall we then excuse our selves, that our desires were not mov'd, that our Souls were not presently in a flame? Was it then, that we thought all a meer fiction; that we durst not give credit to his word, when it brought us the report of the everlasting Glory? Will we avow this? Is this that we will stand by? Or what else have we left to say? Have we a more plausible reason to alledg, that the discovery of such a glory mov'd us not to desire it, than that we believed it not? Sure this is the truth of our case. We should feel this heavenly fire always burning in our breasts, if our Infidelity did not quench the coal. If we did believe, we could not but desire. But doth not the thoughts of this shake our very Souls, and fill us with horror and trembling? We that should be turn'd into indignation, and ready to burn our selves with our own flame, and all about us, if one should give us the lie; that we should dare to put the lie upon the *Eternal Truth*: upon Him whose Word gave stability and being to the World, who made and sustains all things by it! *That awful Word!* That word that shivers Rocks, and melts down Mountains, that makes the animate Creation tremble, that can in a moment blast all things, and dissolve the frame of Heaven and Earth, (which in the mean time it upholds): Is that become with us fabulous lying Breath! Those God-breath'd

breath'd Oracles, those Heavenly Records,
 which discover and describe this blessed state,
 Are they false and foolish Legends? Must
 that be pretended at last (if men durst) that
 is so totally void of all pretences? What
 should be the gain or advantage accruing
 to that Eternal, All-sufficient being? What
 accession should be made to that infinite self-
 fulness by deluding a Worm? Were it con-
 sistent with his *Nature*; What could be his
design to put a cheat upon poor mortal dust?
 If thou dare not impute it to *him*; such a
 deception had a beginning, but what Author
 canst thou imagine of it; or what end? Did
 it proceed from a *good man* or a *bad*? Could
 a *good* and honest mind form so horribly
 wicked a design, to impose an universal de-
 lusion, and lie upon the World, in the name
 of the true and holy God? Or could a *wick-*
ed mind frame a design so directly level'd
 against *wickedness*? Or is there any thing
 so aptly and naturally tending to form the
 World to sobriety, holiness, purity of con-
 versation, as the discovery of this future state
 of Glory? And since the belief of future fe-
 licity is known to obtain *universally* among
 men, Who could be the Author of so *com-*
mon a deception? If thou hadst the mind to
 impose a lie upon all the World, what course
 would'st thou take? How would'st thou lay
 the design? Or w^hy dost thou in this case
imagine what thou knowest not how to *ima-*
gine? And dost thou not without scruple be-
 lieve many things of which thou never had'st
 to

to unquestionable evidence? Or must *that Faith*, which is the foundation of thy Religion and eternal hopes, be the most suspected shaking thing with thee; and have, of all other, the least stability and rootedness in thy Soul? If thou canst not excuse thy *infidelity*, be ashamed of thy so cold and sluggish desires of this glorious state.

And doth it not argue a low sordid spirit, not to desire and aim at the perfection thou art capable of; not to desire that blessedness which alone is suitable and satisfying to a reasonable and spiritual being? Bethink thyself a little; How low art thou sunk into the dirt of the earth? How art thou plunged into the miry ditch, that even thine own clothes might abhor thee? Is the Father of Spirits thy Father? Is the World of Spirits thy Country? Hast thou any relation to that Heavenly Progeny? Art thou ally'd to that blessed Family; And yet undesirous of the same blessedness? Canst thou savour nothing but what smells of the Earth? Is nothing grateful to thy Soul, but what is corrupted by so vicious and impure a tincture? Are all thy delights centred in a dunghil; and the polluted pleasures of a filthy World better to thee than the eternal visions and enjoyments of Heaven? What, art thou all made of Earth? Is thy Soul stupifi'd into a Clod? Hast thou no sense with thee of any thing better and more excellent? Canst thou look upon no glorious thing with a pleased eye? Are things only desirable and lovely to thee,

as

1 Cor. 2.
12.
ἐν δὲ αὐτῷ.

as they are deformed? O consider the corrupted distempered state of thy spirit, and how vile a disposition it hath contracted to it self! Thine looks too like the *Mundane Spirit*; the *Spirit of the World*. The Apostle speaks of it (*διὰ τοῦ κόσμου*) by way of distinction; *We have not received the Spirit of the World, but the Spirit that is from God, that we might know, or see* (and no doubt 'tis desire that animates that eye; 'tis not bare speculative intuition and no more) *the things freely given us of God*. Surely he whose desire doth not guide his eye to the beholding of those things, hath received the Spirit of the World only. A Spirit that conforms him to this World, makes him think only thoughts of this World, and drive the designs of this World, and speak the language of this World. A Spirit that connaturalizes him to the World, makes him of a temper suitable to it: He breathes only worldly breath, carries a worldly aspect, is of a worldly conversation. O poor low Spirit, that such a World should withhold thee from the desire and pursuit of such Glory! Art thou not ashamed to think what thy desires are wont to pitch upon, while they decline and wave this blessedness? Methinks thy very *shame* should compel thee to quit the name of a *Saint* or a *Man*: To forbear numbring thy self with any that pretend to immortality, and go seek Pasture among the Beasts of the Field, with them that live that low animal life that thou dost, and expect no other.

And

And when thou soallest in with the World, how highly dost thou gratifie the pretending and usurping god of it? The great fomentor of the sensual worldly genius: *The Spirit it self that works in the children of disobedience*, and makes them follow the course of the World, holds them fast bound in worldly lusts, and *leads them captive at his will*; causes them (after his own Serpentine manner) to creep and crawl in the dust of the Earth. He is most intimate to this apostate World; informs it (as it were) and actuates it in every part; is even one great Soul to it. *The whole world lies in that wicked one*, (as the body, by best Philosophers, is said to be in the Soul). The world is said to be *convicted* when he is judged. He having fall'n from a state of blessedness in God, hath involv'd the world with himself in the same Apostacy and Condemnation; and labours to keep them fast in the bands of death. The great Redeemer of Souls makes this his business, *to loose and dissolve the work of the Devil*. With that wicked one thou complayest against thy own Soul and the Redeemer of it, while thou neglectest to desire and pursue this blessedness. This is thy debasement, and his triumph; the vile succumbency gives him the day and his will upon thee. He desires no more than that he may suppress in thee all heavenly desires, and keep thee thus a slave and a prisoner (confin'd in thy spirit to this low dark dungeon) by thy own consent. While thou remain-

Eph. 2.
2, 3.

I Joh. 9.
19.

Joh. 16.

I Joh. 3. 8.

remainest without desire after Heaven, he is secure of thee, as knowing then thou wilt take no other way, but what will bring thee unto the same eternal state with himself in the end. He is jealous over thee, that thou direct not a desire, nor glance an eye Heaven-ward : While thou dost not so, thou art entirely subject, and givest as full obedience to him, as thy God requires to himself in order to thy blessedness. But is it a thing tolerable to thy thoughts, that thou should'st yield that heart-obedience to the Devil against God ?

And this being the state of thy case, what more significant expression canst thou make of the contempt of Divine goodness ? O the Love that thou neglectest, while the most glorious issue and product of it is with thee an undesired thing ! Yea, this the thing it self speaks, were there no such competition. What, that when eternal love hath conceived, and is travelling to bring forth such a birth ; that when it invites thee to an expectation of such glory shortly to be revealed, the result of so deep counsels and wonderful works, this should be the return from thee, I desire it not ! Is this thy gratitude to the Father of Glory, the requital of the kindness, yea, and of the blood of thy Redeemer ? If this blessedness were not desirable for it self, methinks the Offerers hand should be a sufficient endearment. But thou canst not so divide or abstract, it consists in beholding and bearing his Glorious likeness who invites thee

thee to it; and therefore in the neglect of it, thou most highly affrontest him.

Yea further, is it not a monstrous unnaturalness towards thy self, as well as impiety towards God, not to desire that perfect final blessedness? Doth not every thing naturally tend to its ultimate perfection and proper end? What creature would not witness against thee, if thou neglect, in thine own capacity and kind, to aim at thine? Surely thou canst not allow thy self to think any thing beneath *this*, worthy to be owned by thee, under that notion, of thy highest good and thy last end. But that thy spirit should labour under an aversion towards thy highest good, towards thy blessedness it self, is not that a dismal token upon thee? If thou didst disaffect and nauseate the things in which thy present life is bound up, and without which thou canst not live, wouldst thou not think thy case deplorable? What dost thou think will become of thy Soul, whose everlasting life is bound up in that very good which thou *desirest not*; which cannot live that life without that good, nor with it, if thou hast no desire to it? O the Eternal Resentments thy Soul will have of this cruelty! To be with-held from that wherein its life lies! Would'st thou not judg him unnatural that should kill his Brother, assassine his Father, starve his Child? What shall be said of him that destroys himself? How may that Soul lament that ever it was thine; and say, O that I had rather been of any such lower kind,

kind, to have animated a Fly, to have inspirited a vile Worm, rather than to have serv'd a reasonable Beast, that by me knew the good it would never follow, and did not desire ! But if thou hast any such desires, in a low degree, after this blessedness, as thou thinkest may entitle thee to the name thou bearest, of a *Saint*, a *Christian* ; Is it not still very unnatural to pursue a *good*, approved by thy stated judgment as *best in it self and for thee*, with so unproportionable, so slothful desires ? For the same reason thou dost desire it at all, thou should'st desire it *much* ; yea, and still more and more, till thou attain it, and be swallowed up into it. Thy *best* and *last good* thou canst never desire too much.

And let it be considered by thee, that the temper thou thinkest thy self innocent of [*an habitual prevalent disaffection to the true blessedness of Saints*], may for ought thou knowest be upon thee ; while it appears thou art so very near the borders of it ; and it appears not with such certainty that thou partakest not in it. It is not so easie a matter, critically to distinguish and conclude of the lowest degree (*in Hypothesis*, or with application to thy own case) of that desire which is necessary to qualifie thee for the enjoyment of this blessedness. And is it not a matter both of *shame* and terror, that thou should'st desire *thy blessedness* so faintly, as not to know whether thou truly desire it at all ? 'Tis true, that a certainty, amongst such as may be sincere, is very little common ; but whence proceeds

ceeds it, but from their too common indulged sloth; out of which all this is designed to awaken thee. And the commonness whereof doth as little detract from the reproach and *sinfulness*, as from the danger of it. 'Tis but a poor defence, for what is *intrinsically evil* in it self, that it is *common*.

But further, as the case is, this is so reproachful a thing, even in common estimate, [*not to desire Heaven and Eternal Glory, or to desire it with very cold and careless desires*], that there are few will profess it, or own it to be their temper; much fewer that will undertake to excuse or justify it. 'Tis so evilly thought of, that among meerly sober and rational men, it can never find an Advocate, or any that will afford it Patronage. The generality pretend a desire of going to Heaven and being with God. If any be so observant of themselves as to know, and so ingenuous as to confess it otherwise with them, they complain of it as their fault, and say, they would fain have it redrest, but are far from assuming that confidence, to defend or plead for it. Consider then, Wilt thou persist in such a temper and disposition of mind as all men condemn; and be guilty of so odious a thing, as shall be censured and blamed by the common concurrent vote and judgment of mankind? Thou would'st be ashamed to stand forth and profess openly to men, that thou desirest an earthly felicity more than a blessedness in Heaven; or at least, that thou art so indifferent, and the

Scales hang so even with thee, that thou canst hardly tell which way they incline most: And art thou not ashamed that this should be thy usual temper; how much soever thou conceal it from the notice and observation of the World?

Moreover, how can it escape thy serious reflection, That if thou pretend it otherwise with thee, 'tis but to add one sin to another, and cover thy Carnality with Hypocrisie and Dissimulation? Yea, while thou continuest in that temper of spirit, not to desire this blessedness as thy supreme end, the *whole* of thy Religion is but an empty shew, an artificial disguise; it carries an appearance and pretence, as if thou wast aiming at God and Glory, while thy heart is set another way, and the bent of thy Soul secretly carries thee a counter-course. Hath not *Religion* an aspect towards *Blessedness*? What mean thy Praying, thy Hearing, thy Sacramental Communion, if thou have not a design for Eternal Glory? What makest thou in this *way*, if thou have not thy heart set towards this *end*?

Nor is it more dishonest and unjust, than it is foolish and absurd, That the disposition and tendency of thy Soul should be directly contrary to the only design of the Religion thou professest and dost externally practise. Thy profession and desires are nothing but self-contradiction. Thou art continually running counter to thy self; outwardly pursuing what thou inwardly declinest. Thy *real end* (which

(which can be no other than what thou really desirest and fettest thy heart upon) and thy *visible way* are quite contrary: So that while thou continuest the course of Religion, in which thou art engaged, having taken down from before thine eyes the end which thou should'st be aiming at, and which alone Religion can aptly subserve, Thy Religion hath no design or end at all, (none at least which thou would'st not be ashamed to profess and own). Indeed this temper of heart I am now pleading against, an *undesirousness* or *indifferency of spirit* towards the eternal glory, renders Religion the vainest thing in the World. For whereas all the other actions of our lives have their stated proper ends, Religion hath in this case none at all; none to which it hath any designation in this nature, or any aptness to subserve. This monstrous absurdity it infers, (and how strange it is, that it should not be reflected on)? That whereas if you ask any man of common understanding, *what he doth this or that action for*, especially if they be *stated actions*, done by him in an ordinary course, he can readily tell you, *for such and such an end*: But ask him why he continues any practice of Religion, he cannot say (in this case) for what.

For can any man imagine what other end Religion naturally serves for, but to bring men to blessedness? Which being no other thing than what hath been here described; such as are found not to desire it really and

supremely, as their end, can have no *real attainable end* of their being religious at all. To drive on a continued course and series of actions in a visible pursuit of that which they desire not, and have no mind to, is such a piece of folly, so fond and vain a trifling, that as I remember, *Cicero* reports, *Cato* to have said concerning the South-sayers of his time, *he did wonder they could look in one anothers faces and not laugh*, (being conscious to each others impostures, and the vanity of their profession); so one would as justly wonder, that the generality of carnal men, (who may shrewdly guess at the temper of one anothers minds) do not laugh at each other, that they are jointly engaged in such exercises of Religion, to the design whereof the common and agreed temper of their spirits do so little correspond. As if all were in very good earnest for Heaven, when each one knows for himself, and may (possibly with more *Truth* than *Charity*) suppose of the rest, that if they might always continue in their earthly stations, they had rather never come there. And therefore that they desire it not *supremely*, and so not as their end at all; consider it then, that thy no-desire of this blessed state quite dispirits thy Religion, utterly ravishes away its Soul, leaves it a dead, foolish, vain thing, renders it an *idle impertinency*, not a *mean* to a valuable *end*. This *desire* is the life of Religion: All duties and exercises of piety are without it, but empty Formalities, Solemn pieces of Pageantry; every

ry service done to God, but the *Sacrifice of a Fool*, if not animated by the desire of final blessedness in him, and be not part of our way thither, a means designed to the attainment of it; which nothing can be, that we are not put upon by the vertue of the *desired end*. Without this Religion is not it self. A continuance in well-doing, is as it were the Body of it; and therein a *seeking honour, glory, and immortality*, the Soul and Spirit. The *desire* of an *Heavenly Country* must run through the whole course of our *Earthly Pilgrimage*: It were otherwise a continued error, an uncertain wandring, no steady tending towards our end: So that thou art a meer Vagrant, if this *desire* do not direct thy course towards thy Fathers house. And methinks all this should make thee even *ashamed* of thy self, if thou canst not find this *desire* to have a settled residence, and a ruling power in thy Soul. Then,

2. *Sense of Praise* should signifie something too, as the Apostle, *Whatsoever things are—pure, lovely, &c. If there be any vertue,—any praise, think of these things* And hath not the eternal glory those Characters upon it of *purity* and *loveliness* beyond all things? Is it not a *laudable* and *praise-worthy* thing, to have a mind and heart set upon *that*?

The blessed God puts a note of excellency upon this temper of spirit: *But they desire a better Country, that is, an heavenly; wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their* Heb. 11. 16.

God, &c. This renders them a people wor-

1 Thes. 2.
12.

thy of him who hath called them to his kingdom and glory; fit for him to own a relation to. Had they been of low terrene spirits, he would have accounted it a shame to him, to have gone under the name and cognisance of their God. But in as much as they *desire* the Heavenly Country, have learned to trample this terrestrial World, cannot be contained within this lower Sphere, nor satisfie themselves in earthly things; they now discover a *certain excellency of spirit*, in respect whereof, God is not ashamed to own a relation to them, before all the World to be called their God; to let men see what account he makes of such a Spirit.

Yea, this is the proper genuine spirit and temper of a Saint, which agrees to him as he is such. He is begotten to the eternal inheritance. A disposition (and therein a *desire*) to it is in his very nature, (the new nature he hath received), implanted there from his original. He is born Spirit of Spirit, and by that birth is not intituled only, but *adapted* and suited also to that pure and spiritual state of blessedness. That grace, by the appearance whereof men are made Christians, teaches also, instructs to this very thing, to *look for this blessed hope, the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ*. That which you know consummates that blessedness. *For when Christ, who is their life, shall appear, then shall they also appear with him in glory*; by the participation of the divine nature, their spirits escape and get up
above

above this corrupt impure World. That new nature is a holy flame that carries their hearts upwards towards Heaven.

Further, *Such desires* appear hence to be of *divine original*, an infusion from the blessed God himself. That nature is from him immediately in which they are implanted. The Apostle speaking of his earnest panting desire, *to have mortality swallowed up of life*, 2 Cor. 5. 4. presently adds, *He that wrought us to the self-same thing is God.*

They are *obedient desires*. The Souls present answer to the heavenly Call, by which Gods calls it to his Kingdom and Glory. This glory is (as hath been formerly noted) the very term of that calling. *The God of all grace hath called us into his eternal glory by Christ Jesus.* The glorified state is the mark, the prize of the high calling of God in Christ. 'Tis the matter of the Apostles thanksgiving unto God, on the behalf of the *Thessalonians*, that *they were called by his Gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.* When the Soul desires this glory, it obediently answers this call, This is a compliance and subjection of heart to it. How lovely and becoming a thing is this, when God touches the heart with a stamp and impress of glory, and it forthwith turns it self to that very point, and stands directly bent towards the state of glory; is not wayward or perverse, but herein yields it self to God, and complies with the divine pleasure.

Heb. 3. 1.

1 Thes. 2.

12.

1 Pet. 5.

12.

Phil. 3. 14.

2 Thes. 2.

12.

Such *desires* have much in them of a *child-like ingenuity*; to desire the sight of a *Father's face*; when this is the intimate sense of the Soul, *Shew me the Father and it suffices*. To desire the fullest conformity to his nature and will, to be perfect as that heavenly Father is perfect, what doth better become a Child?

They are *generous desires*; they aim at perfection, the highest that created nature is capable of; not contented to have had some glances of divine glory, some strokes and lines of his image, but aspiring to full-ey'd visions, a perfect likeness.

They are *victorious desires*; they (as it were) ride in triumph over the World and every sublunary thing; they must be supposed to have conquered sensual inclinations, to have got the mastery over terrene dispositions and affections. With what holy contempt and scorn of every earthly thing doth that lofty Soul quit this dirty World and ascend, that is powerfully carried by its own *desire* towards that blessed state? The *desire* of such a knowledg of Christ, as might transform into his likeness, and pass the Soul through all degrees of conformity to him, till it attain the resurrection of the dead, and become like a risen glorified Jesus; Such a *desire* I say, if it make all things seem as loss and dung in comparison, (even a formal spiritless Religion it self), will it not render this World the most despicable Dunghil of all the rest? Try such a Soul if you can, tempt

it

it down, to enjoy a *flattering, kind world*, or to please it when *angry and unkind*. When *desires* after this glory are once awaken'd into an active lively vigor, when the fire is kindled, and the flame ascends, and this refined spirit is joyfully ascending therein, See if you can draw it back, and make it believe this World a more regardable thing. Why should not all those considerations make thee in love with this blessed frame of spirit, and restless till thou find thy self incapable of being satisfied with any thing but divine likeness?

6. *That while we cannot as yet attain the mark and end of our Desires, we yield not to a comfortless despondency in the way, but maintain in our hearts a lively joy, in the hope that hereafter we shall attain it.* 6 Rule.

We are not all this while perswading to the *desire* and *pursuit* of an unattainable good. Spiritual *desires* are also rational, and do therefore involve *hope* with them; and that hope ought to *infer* and *cherish* joy. Hopeless desire is full of torment, and must needs banish joy from that breast which it hath got the possession of. 'Tis a disconsolate thing, to desire what we must never expect to enjoy, and are utterly unlikely ever to compass. But these desires are part of the *new creature*, which is not of such a composition, as to have a principle of endless trouble and disquiet in it self. The Father of mercies is not so little merciful to his own Child, to lay it under

der a necessity, *from its very natural constitution*, of being for ever miserable by the desire of that which it can never have. It had been very unlike the workmanship of God, to make a Creature to which it should be *necessary to desire*, and *impossible to enjoy* the same thing.

No: But as he hath given holy Souls, (as to the present case), great *incentives* of desire, so doth he afford them proportionable *encouragement* of hope also; and that *hope* intervening, can very well reconcile *desire* and joy, and lodg them together in the same bottom. So that as it is a thing capable of no excuse, to hear of this blessedness and not desire it; so it would be, to desire and not expect it, to expect it, and not rejoice in it, even while we are under that expectation. And it must be a very raised joy that shall answer to the expectation of so great things. If one should give a stranger to Christianity an account of the Christian Hopes, and tell him what they expect to *be* and *enjoy*, e'relong; he would sure promise himself, to find so many Angels dwelling in human flesh, and reckon, when he came among them he should be as amidst the heavenly Quire; every one full of joy and praise. He would expect to find us living on *earth*, as the inhabitants of *heaven*, as so many pieces of immortal glory lately dropt down from above, and shortly again returning thither. He would look to find, every-where in the Christian World, incarnate glory sparkling through the over-shadowing

dowing vail ; and wonder how this earthly Sphere should be able to contain so many great Souls.

But when he draws nearer to us, and observes the course and carriage of our lives ; when he sees us walk as other men, and considers the strange disagreement of our daily Conversation to our so great avowed Hopes, and how little sense of joy and pleasure we discover our selves to conceive in them ; Would he not be ready to say, “ Sure some
“ or other (willing only to amuse the World
“ with the noise of strange things) have composed a Religion for these men, which they
“ themselves understand nothing of. If they
“ do adopt and own it for theirs, they understand not their own pretences ; they are
“ taught to speak some big words, or to
“ give a faint or seeming assent to such as
“ speak them in their names ; but ’tis impossible they should be in good earnest, or believe themselves in what they say and profess.

And what reply then should we be able to make ? For who can think that any who acknowledge a God, and understand at all what that name imports, should value at so low a rate, as we (visibly) do, the eternal fruition of his Glory, and a present Sonship to him, the pledg of so great an hope.

He that is born Heir to great Honours and Possessions, though he be upon great uncertainties as to the enjoyment of them, (for how many interveniences may prevent him) ?
yet

yet when he comes to understand his possibilities and expectancies, How big doth he look and speak? What grandeur doth he put on? His Hopes form his spirit and deportment. But is it proportionably so with us? Do our Hopes fill our hearts with joy, our mouths with praise, and cloath our faces with a chearful aspect, and make an holy alacrity appear in all our conversations?

But let not the design of this Discourse be mistaken. 'Tis not a presumptuous confidence I would encourage, nor a vain ostentation, nor a disdainful over-looking of others whom we fancy our selves to excel. Such things hold no proportion with a Christian spirit. His is a modest humble exultation, a serious severe joy; suitable to his solid stable Hope. His spirit is not puff'd up and swell'd with air, 'tis not big by an inflation, or a light and windy tumor; but 'tis really fill'd with effectual pre-apprehensions of a weighty glory. His joy accordingly exerts it self with a steady lively vigor, equally removed from vain lightness and stupidity, from conceitedness, and insensibleness of his blessed state. He forgets not that he is less than the least of Gods mercies, but disowns not his title to the greatest of them. He abases himself to the dust, in the sense of his own vileness; but in the admiration of Divine Grace, he rises as high as Heaven. In his humiliation he affects to equal himself with Worms, in his joy and praise with Angels. He is never unwilling

ling to diminish himself, but afraid of detracting any thing from the love of God, or the issues of that love.

But most of all he magnifies (as he hath cause) this its last and most perfect issue. And by how much he apprehends his own unworthiness, he is the more rapt up into a wonderful joy, that such blessedness should be his designed portion.

But now, how little do we find in our selves of this blessed frame of spirit? How remote are we from it? Let us but enquire a little into our own Souls: Are there not too apparent symptoms with us of the little joy we take in the fore-thoughts of future blessedness? For,

First, How few thoughts have we of it? What any delight in, they remember often. 'Tis said of the same person, that *his delight is in the Law of the Lord*, and that *in his Law he doth meditate day and night*. And when the Psalmist professes his own *delight in Gods statutes*, he adds, *I will not forget thy Word*. Should we not be as unapt to forget Heaven, if our *delight* were there? But do not days pass with us, wherein we can allow our selves no leisure to mind the eternal glory; when yet vanities throng in upon us, without any obstruction or check?

Psal. I. 23

Psal. 119.

16.

And (what is consequent hereupon), How seldom is this blessed state the subject of our discourse? How often do Christians meet, and not a word of Heaven? O heavy carnal

carnal hearts ! Our home and eternal blessedness in this, appears to be forgotten among us. How often may a person converse with us, e're he understand our relation to the Heavenly Country ? If Exiles meet in a foreign Land, what pleasant discourse have they of home ? They suffer not one another to forget it. Such was *their remembrance of Sion*, who sat together bemoaning themselves by the Rivers of Babylon, *a making mention of it*, (as the Phrase is often used). And methinks (even as to this remembrance) it should be our common resolution too. *If we forget thee, O Jerusalem ; If we forget to make mention of thee, O thou City of the living God ; Let our right hand forget her cunning ; our tongue shall sooner cleave to the roof of our mouth ; and so it would be, did we prefer that Heavenly Jerusalem above our chief joy.*

Again, How little doth it weigh with us ? It serves not to out-weigh the smallest trouble ; if we have not our carnal desire in every thing gratifi'd, if any thing fall out cross to our inclinations, this glory goes for nothing with us. Our discontents swallow up our hopes and joys ; and heaven is reckon'd as a thing of nought. If when *outward* troubles afflict or threaten us, we could have the certain prospect of better days, *that would sensibly revive* and please us. Yea, can we not please our selves with very uncertain groundless hopes of this kind, without promise or valuable reason ? But to be told of a recompence at the resurrection of the just, of a day
 *
 when

when we shall see the face of God, and be satisfied with his likeness; this is insipid and without savour to us, and affords us but cold comfort. The uncertain things of time, signifie more with us, than the certain things of eternity. Can we think 'tis all this while well with us? Can we think this a tolerable evil, or suffer with patience such a distemper of spirit? Methinks it should make us even weary of our selves, and solicitous for an effectual speedy redress.

The redress must be more in our *own doing*, (striving with our Souls and with God for them) than in what *any man can say*. Most of the considerations under that foregoing Rule, are with little variation applicable to this present purpose. I shall here annex only some few subordinate directions; which may lead us into this blessed state of life, and give us some joyful foretastes of the future blessedness, according as our spirits shall comply with them. But expect not to be cured by prescriptions, without using them; or that heavenly joy can be the creature of mortal unregarded breath, we can only prescribe means and methods through which God may be pleased to descend, and in which thou art diligently to insist and wait. And because I cannot well suppose thee ignorant, where much is said to this purpose; I shall therefore say little.

1.

1. *Possess thy Soul with the apprehension, that thou art not at liberty in this matter? but that there is a certain spiritual delectation, which is incumbent on thee as indispensable duty. Some whose morose tempers do more estrange them from delights, think themselves more especially concern'd, to banish every thing of that kind from their Religion, and fancies it only to consist in sower and righteous severities. Others seem to think it arbitrary and indifferent; or that, if they live in a continual sadness and dejection of spirit, 'tis only their infelicity, not their fault; and apprehend not the obligation that is upon them by a divine Law, otherwise to manage and order their spirits. But what then? Are such words thought to be spoken at random, Her ways are ways of pleasantness. The Lord is the portion of mine Inheritance. The Lines are fall'n to me in pleasant places, (or, in the midst of pleasantnesses, as the expression hath been noted to signify)? Do such Precepts carry no sense with them; Delight thy self in the Lord.—Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say, rejoice; with many more? Do all passages of this kind in Scripture stand for Cyphers, or were they put in them by chance? Is there such a thing as an aptitude to delectation in our natures; and doth the sanctification thereof entitle the joy of Saints to a place among the fruits of the Spirit; and yet is the exercise of it to have no place in their hearts and practice? Do not think you are permitted*

Prov. 3. 17.

Psal. 37. 4.

Phil. 4. 4.

Gal. 5. 22.

ted so to extinguish or frustrate so considerable a principle of the Divine Life. Know, that the due exercise of it is a part of the order and discipline of Gods Family. That it is a constitution of the divine Goodness and Wisdom both to cherish his *own*, and invite in *strangers* to him; yea, that is the scope and aim of the whole Gospel-revelation, that what is discovered to us of the word of life, was purposely written to draw Souls into fellowship with the Father and the Son, that their *joy might be full*. That the Ministers of this Gospel are therefore stiled the *Helpers of their joy*. Therefore, though here it be not required nor allowed, that you should indulge a vain trifling levity, or a sensual joy, or that you should rejoice you know not why, (imitating the laughter of a fool), or inopportunately, when your *state* admits it not, or when the Lord *calls to mourning*; yet settle however this persuasion in your hearts, that the serious, rational, regular, seasonable exercise of *delight* and *joy* is matter of duty, to be charged upon conscience, from the authority of God; and is an integral part in the Religion of Christians. And then sure you will not think any object more proper and suitable for it to be exercised upon, than the foreseen state of blessedness, which is in it self a *fulness of joy*; the *joy of our Lord*. And is, in the pre-apprehensions of it, a more considerable matter of joy than our present state affords us besides; and without relation whereto,

1 Joh. 1. 4.
2 Cor. 4.

Psal. 16.
Mat. 25.

we have no matter of rational joy at all.

2.

2. *Keep Faith in exercise*; both in that act of it which *perswades* the Soul of the truth of the Gospel revelation, and that act of it which *unites* it to God through the Mediator. The Apostle prays on the behalf of his *Roman* Christians, that they might be *filled with joy and peace in believing*; and we are told, how effectually (as to this) it supply'd the place of *sight*. Such as had not *seen* Christ, (which was the priviledg of many other Christians of that time), yet *believing, did rejoice with joy unspeakable and glorious*.

Rom. 15.
13.

1 Pet. 1. 8.

Heb. 11. 1.

Faith directly tends, in that double office before-mentioned, to excite and foment this joy. As it assents to the truth of the Gospel-revelation, it realizes the object, is the substance and evidence of the invisible glory. As it unites the Soul with God through Christ, in a *fiducial* and *obediential* closure, it ascertains our interest therein, and is our actual acceptance of our Blessedness it self; for when we take God through Christ to be our God, what is it, but to accept him as our eternal and satisfying portion, whom we are after fully to enjoy, in the vision and participation of his glorious excellencies and infinite fulness? Which two acts of Faith we have mentioned together in one Text, —they were *perswaded* of the Promises, and *embraced* them; the former respecting the truth of the promise, the latter the *goodness* of the thing promised. And hereupon they
con-

confessed themselves (as it follows) Pilgrims and Strangers on earth ; which abdication of the earth as none of their Country, could not be, but that through their faith they had a joyous pre-apprehension of that better state. That confession did manifestly involve in it a *lively joy*, springing from the sight and embrace of that more taking distant good which the promise presented them with ; whence they could not think it enough, to be such to themselves in their own thoughts and the temper of their minds ; but they cannot forbear (so overcoming were their sights and tastes) to give it out, to speak, and look, and live, as those that were carried up in their spirits above this earth, and who did even disdain to own themselves in any other relation to it, than that of Foreigners and Strangers.

Set thy Faith on work, Soul, and keep it a work, and thou wilt find this no riddle ; it will be so with thee too ; we have much talk of Faith among us, and have the name often in our mouths, but how few are the real lively Believers ? Is it to be thought that such Blessedness should not more affect our hearts ; nay , would it not ravish away our very Souls, did we thoroughly believe it ? And were it our present daily work, to renew the bonds of a vital union with the blessed God, in whom we expect to be blessed for ever, Could that be without previous gusts of pleasure ? 'Tis not talking of Faith but living by it, that will give

us the experience of heavenly delights and joys.

3.

3. *Take heed of going in thy practice against thy light*; of persisting in a course of known or suspected sin, that states thee in a direct hostility and rebellion against Heaven; and can never suffer thee to think of eternity and the other world with comfort; will fill thy mind with frightful apprehensions of God, render the sight of his face the most terrible thing to thy thoughts thou canst imagine; and satisfaction with his likeness the most impossible thing. Let a good understanding and correspondence be continued between God and thee, (which is not possible, if thou disobeyest the dictates of thy Conscience, and takest the liberty to do what thou judgest God hath forbidden thee), that this may be thy rejoicing, *the testimony of a good conscience; that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not according to fleshly wisdom, but the grace of God thou hast had thy conversation—*.

2 Cor. I.
12.

Take God for a witness of thy ways and walkings; approve thy self to his jealous eye; study to carry thy self acceptably towards him, and unto all well-pleasing. Let that be thy ambition, to stand right in his thoughts, to appear gracious in his eyes. Hold fast thine integrity, that thy heart may not reproach thee as long as thou livest. If iniquity be in thy hand, put it away; then shalt thou lift up thy face without spot and without fear. Be a faithful subject of that Kingdom of God, (and here Conscience rules under

der him), which consists first in *righteousness*, and then in *peace and joy in the Holy Ghost*. Thou wilt, so, daily behold the face of God in righteousness and with pleasure; but wilt most of all please thy self to think of thy final appearance before him, and the Blessedness that shall ensue.

4. Watch and arm thy self against the too forcible strokes and impressions of sensible objects. Let not the favour of such low vile things corrupt the palate of thy Soul. A sensual earthly mind and heart cannot taste heavenly delights; *They that are after the flesh do savour the things of the flesh; they that are after the Spirit, the things of the Spirit*. Labour to be thoroughly mortified toward this world and the present state of things. Look upon this Scheme and Pageant as passing away; keep natural appetites under restraint, (the world and the lusts of it pass away together): sensuality is an impure thing. Heavenly refined joy cannot live amidst so much filth. Yea, and if thou give thy flesh liberty too far in things that are (*in specie*) lawful, it will soon get advantage to domineer and keep thy soul in a depressing servitude. Abridg it then, and cut it short, that thy mind may be enlarged and at liberty, may not be throng'd and pre-possess'd with carnal imaginations and affections. "Let thy Soul
 "(if thou wilt take this instruction from a
 "Heathen) look with a constant erect mind
 "into the undefiled light, neither darkened
 "nor born down towards the Earth; but

4.

1 Cor. 7:

31.

1 Joh. 2.17.

Max. Tyr.

in dissert.

τι ο θεος

κατα

Πλατωνος.

“stopping its Ears, and turning its Eyes and
 “all other Senses back upon it self; and
 “quite abolishing out of it self, all Earthly
 “Sighs, and Groans, and Pleasures, and Glo-
 “ries and Honours, and Disgrace; and
 “having forsaken all these, chuse for the
 “Guides of its way, true Reason and strong
 “Love, the one whereof will shew it the
 “way, the other make it easie and plea-
 “sant.

5.

5. *Having voided thy mind of what is earth-
 ly and carnal, apply and turn it to this blessed
 Theam.* The most excellent and the vilest
 objects are alike to thee, while thou mind-
 est them not. Thy thoughts possibly bring
 thee in nothing but vexation and trouble,
 which would bring in assoon joy and plea-
 sure, didst thou turn them to proper objects.
 A thought of the heavenly glory is assoon
 thought as of an earthly cross. We com-
 plain the World troubles us; then what do
 we there? Why get we not up, in our spi-
 rits, into the quieter Region? What trouble
 would the thoughts of future glory be to
 us? How are thoughts and wits set on
 work for this flesh? But we would have
 our Souls flourish as the Lillies, without
 any thing of their own care. Yea, we make
 them toil for torture, and not for joy, re-
 volve an affliction a thousand times before
 and after it comes, and have never done
 with it, when eternal Blessedness gains not
 a thought.

6. *Plead*

6. Plead earnestly with God for his Spirit.

61

This is joy in the Holy Ghost; or whereof he is the Author. Many Christians (as they must be called) are such strangers to this work of imploring and calling in the blessed Spirit, as if they were capable of adopting these words, *We have not so much as heard whether there be an Holy Ghost*. That name is with them as an empty sound. How hardly are we convinc'd of our necessary dependance on that *free Spirit*, as to all our truly spiritual operations? This Spirit is the very earnest of our inheritance. The foretastes and first fruits we have here of the future Blessedness, the joy and pleasure, the complacential relishes we have of it before-hand, are by the gracious vouchsafement and work of this blessed Spirit. The things *that eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, and which have not entred into the heart of man*, are revealed by this Spirit. Therefore doth the Apostle direct his prayer on the behalf of the *Ephesians*, to the Father of this glory, that *he would give them this spirit of wisdom and revelation,—to enlighten the eyes of their understanding, that they might know the hope of his calling, and the riches of the glory of his inheritance in (or among) the Saints*. And its revelation is such as begets an impression; in respect whereof 'tis said also, *to seal up to the day of redemption*. Therefore pray earnestly for this Spirit; not in idle dreaming words of course, but as being really apprehensive of the necessity of prevailing:

Eph. i.

And give not over till thou find that sacred fire diffusing it self through thy mind and heart, to enlighten the one and refine the other, and so prepossess *both* of this glory, that thy Soul may be all turned into joy and praise. And then let me add here, (without the formality of a distinct head), That it concerns thee to take heed of *quenching that Spirit*, by either *resisting* or *neglecting* its holy dictates; or, as the same precept is otherwise given, of *grieving the Spirit*: he is by Name and Office the *Comforter*. The Primitive Christians, 'tis said, walked in the fear of God, and *in the comfort of the Holy Ghost*. Is it equal dealing, to grieve him whose business it is to comfort thee? Or canst thou expect joy where thou causest grief? *Walk in the Spirit*; adore its power. Let thy Soul do it homage within thee. Wait for its holy influences, and yield thy self to its ducture and guidance; so wilt thou go as *the redeemed of the Lord*, with *everlasting joy upon thy head*, till thou enter that presence, where is fulness of joys and pleasures for evermore.

Nor do thou think it improper or strange, that thou should'st be called upon to rejoice in what thou dost not yet possess. Thy hope is instead of fruition; 'tis an anticipated enjoyment. We are commanded to *rejoice in hope*; and Saints have profest to do so, to *rejoice even in the hope of the glory of God*. Nor is it unreasonable that should be thy present highest joy. For though yet it be a distant

Rom. 12.

12.

Rom. 5. 2.

distant thing, and indistinctly revealed, the excellency of the object makes compensation for *both*, with an abundant surplufage. As any one would much more rejoice to be *assured* by a great person, of ample *possessions* he would make him his Heir to, (though he knew not distinctly what they should be), than to see a *shilling*, already his own, with his own eyes.

CHAP.

C H A P. XX.

The addition of two Rules, that more specially respect the yet future season of this Blessedness, after this life; viz.

Rule 7. *That we patiently wait for it until death.*

Rule 8. *That we love not too much this present life.*

THere are yet two more Rules to be superadded, that respect the season of this Blessedness, [*when we awake*], i.e. not till we go out of time into eternity, not till we pass out of the drowsie darkness of our present state, till the night be over with us, and the vigorous light of the everlasting day do shine upon us. Hence therefore it will be further necessary :

7 Rule. 7. *That while the appointed proper season of this Blessedness is not yet come, (i.e. till God shall vouchsafe to translate us from our present earthly state), we compose our spirits to a patient expectation of it.*

Upon a twofold account, the exercise of patience is very requisite in the present case, viz. both in respect of this very expectation it self, and also in respect of the concomitant

tant miseries of this expecting state. In the former respect, an *absent good* is the matter of our *patience*; in the latter, *present and incumbent evil*. It falls more directly in our way, to speak to the exercise of *patience* upon the former account; yet as to the latter, (though it be more collateral as to our present purpose), it cannot be unseasonable briefly to consider that also.

First therefore, *The very expectation it self of this Blessedness*, renders *patience* very requisite to our present state. *Patience* hath as proper and necessary an exercise in *expecting the good* we want and desire, as in *enduring the evil* that is actually upon us. The direction (it must be remembred) intends such only as apprehend and desire this Blessedness as their greatest good, whose Souls are transported with earnest longings fully to enjoy what they have foretasted. I am apprehensive enough, that others need it not. There is no use of *patience* in expecting what we desire not.

But as to those who desire it most, and who therefore are most concerned in this advice, it may possibly become a doubt, *How, since there is sin in our present ignorance of God and unlikeness to him, this can be the matter of any patience.*

We must therefore know, that as our knowledge of God, and conformity to him, are both our *duty* and *blessedness*, the matter both of our *endeavour* and of Gods *vouchsafement*; so our ignorance of him, and unlikeness to him,

him, are both our *sin* and our *misery*; which misery, though God hath graciously removed it in part, yet also he continues it upon us in part, (as our sad experience tells us), by his just and wise dispensation, which we cannot except against.

Now therefore, looking upon the defect of our knowledg of God and likeness to him, under the *former notion*, though we are to reflect upon our selves with great displeasure and indignation; yet looking on them in the *latter notion*, we are to submit to the righteous dispensation of God with a meek unrepining *patience*.

By this *patience*, therefore, I mean not a stupid succumbency under the remaining disease and distemper of our spirits, in this our present state; a senseless indifferency and oscitant cessation from continual endeavours of further redress; but a silent and submissive veneration of Divine Wisdom, and Justice, and Goodness, that are sweetly complicated in this procedure with us, with a quiet peaceful expectation of the blessed issue of it.

This being premised, I shall briefly shew,

That we have *need of patience* } in this pre-
That we have *reason* for it } sent case.

1. *That we have need of it*, (supposing our Souls are *intent upon Glory*, that we are in earnest in this pursuit) will appear upon sundry accounts.

First,

First, *The greatness of the thing we expect.* To behold the face of God, to be satisfied with his likeness. What serious heart, apprehensive of its own concerns, can without much patience hold out under such an expectation? How do Lovers that expect the marriage-day, tell the hours, and chide the Sun that it makes no more haste? But how can that Soul contain it self, that expects the most intimate fruition of the Lord of glory.

Again, consider *the continual representation and frequent inculcations of this glory.* Its vigorous powerful beams are, by often repeated pulsations, continually beating upon such Souls as are intent towards it. Life and immortality are brought to light in the Gospel; and they are obliged by command and inclination to attend its discoveries. The eye that's once smitten, looks again and again, 'tis not satisfied with seeing; and every renewed look meets with, still, fresh rayes of glory; they have frequent foretasts and prelibations, which still give life to new desires. To lie under the direct stroke of the powers of the world to come, this requires much patience, to sustain the burden of such an expectation. Life it self were otherwise a bitter and a wearisom thing.

* And the want of such foretasts (for alas they are not constant) makes desire sometimes more restless, and expectation more bitter and grievous.

nè fortè, posthàc, tantæ dulcedinis hujus comparatione, tota tibi in terris vita non solum amarissima, verum etiam amaritudo ipso penitus videatur. M. Ficin. Epist.

* Cane-
rem tibi
angelicâ
voce thro-
norum;
quàm mi-
rificâ,
semper in
patriâ
dulcedine
replea-
mur; nisi
vererit,

More-

Moreover, consider *the Nature and Spring of these desires*, that work in heavenly Souls towards this glory. They are of a Divine Nature and Original; *He that hath wrought us to this self-same thing is God*, 2 Cor. 5. 5.

Observe the tenour of this Proposition; God is not the subject of predication, but the predicate. The action is not predicated of God, as it would in this form of words, *God hath wrought us*, &c. but God is predicated of this agent, *q. d. this is the work of a Deity*; none but God could be the Author of such desires. That a Soul should be acted towards glory by the alone power of an Almighty hand! here needs a *Divine Patience* to sustain it, and make it strong and able to endure such a *motion*, where there is *Divine Power* to act and move it forward. The Frame could not hold else, it must dissolve.

2Thes. 3. 5. The Apostle therefore praying for the *Thesalonians*, that God would direct their hearts into the love of himself, (which could not but enflame their Souls with a desire of a perfect vision and enjoyment), presently adds, *and into the patient waiting for of Christ*. Where we cannot by the way but reflect upon the admirable constitution and equal temper of the new Creature, as to the principles that are ingredient into the composition of it, *feruent desires* allay'd with *meek submission*, *mighty love* with *strong patience*. If we consider it in *actu signato*, or in its abstract Idea, this is its temperament; and of these there

there is a gradual participation, where-
ever you find it actually existing. God had
otherwise formed a creature (the prime of
his creatures) so as by its most intrinsecal
constituent principles to be a torment to it
self.

La'tly, *The tiresome nature of expectation in
it self*, is not least considerable. It carries
('tis true) pleasure (if it be *hoping expecta-
tion*) with it; but not without a great ad-
mixture of pain. It brings a kind of tor-
ture to the mind, as a continued exertion
or stretching forth of the neck (by which it
is exprest) doth to the body. Therefore it is
most significantly said by the wise man, *Hope
defer'd makes the heart sick*. All these, I say,
together discover the truth of what the
Apostle tells us, *We have need of patience,
that when we, &c. we may inherit the Pro-
mise*.

Rom. 8. 19.
Pro. 12. 12.

Heb. 10.

2. And as we have need of it, so we have
also reason for it, upon many accounts. 'Tis
no piece of rigorous severity to be put upon
the exercise of some patience, to be kept a-
while in a waiting posture for the completion
of this blessedness. For,

First, *The thing you expect is sure*. You
have not to do in this matter with one who is
inconstant, or likely to change. If such a one
should make us large promises, we should
have some cause never to think our selves
secure, till we had them made good to us. But
since we live in the hope of eternal life, which
God who cannot lie, and who, we know, is
faith-

Tit. 1. 2.
Heb. 10. 23.

faithful, hath promised, we may be confident, and this confidence should quiet our hearts. What a faithful friend keeps for us, we reckon as safe in his hands, as in our own. He that believes makes not haste. And impatient haste argues an unbelieving jealousy and distrust. Surely, there is an end, and thy expectation will not be cut off.

And then, *'tis an happiness that will recompense the most wearisome expectation. 'Twere good sometimes to consider with our selves, what's the object of our hope? are our expectations pitch'd upon a valuable good, that will be worth while to expect? so the Psalmist, What wait I for? and he answers himself, my hope is in thee. Sure then that hope will not make ashamed. 'Twere a confounding thing to have been a long time full of great hopes that at last dwindle into some petite trifle; but when we know beforehand the business is such as will defray it self, bear its own charges, who would not be contented to wait?*

Nor will the time of expectation be long, when I shall awake, when he shall appear. Put it to the longest term, 'twas said, Sixteen hundred years ago, to be but a little while; three times over in the shutting up of the Bible, he tells us I come quickly. He seems to foresee he should be something impatiently expected: And at last, Surely I come quickly, q.d. What, will you not believe me? Be patient, saith the Apostle, to the coming of the Lord: and presently he adds, be patient, stablish your hearts,

hearts for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.

Yea, and amidst the many troubles of that short time of expectation many present comforts are intermixt. Heaven is open to us. We have constant liberty of access to God. He disdains not our present converse. We may have the constant pleasure of the exercise of grace, the heavenly delights of meditation, the joy of the publick solemnities of worship, the communion and encouragement of fellow-Christians, the light of that countenance whereof we expect the eternal vision, the comforts of the Holy Ghost, the continual prospect of glory all the way thither. What cause have we of impatience or complaint?

Further, *Saints of all ages have had their expecting time.* We are required to be followers of them who through faith and patience have inherited the promises. Our Saviour himself waited a life's time for his glorification. *I have (saith he) glorifi'd thee on earth; I have finished the work thou gavest me to do! And now, Father, glorifie me with thine own self, &c.*

And while we are waiting (if it be not our fault) our glory will be encreasing, We may be glorifying God in the mean time, which is the end of our beings; we need not live here to no purpose.

Again, *We were well enough content, till God more clearly revealed that other state, to live always as we do.* 'Tis not now ingenuous to be impatiently querulous about the time of

Hh

our

our entring into it. 'Tis his free vouchsafement; we never merited such a thing at his hands. 'Tis not commendable among men, to be over-quick in exacting debts, even where there was an antecedent right, much less where the right only shall accrue by promise, not yet sueable; would it not shame us to have God say to us, *Have patience with me, and I will pay you all?*

And our former state should be often reflected on. If you had promised great things to a wretch lately taken off the dunghil, and he is every day impatiently urging you to an untimely accomplishment, would you not check his over-bold haste, by minding him of his original? It becomes not base and low-born persons to be transported with a preposterous over-hasty expectation of high and great things.

Jam. i.

And if God bear with the sinfulness of our present state, is it not reasonable we should bear with the infelicity of it to his appointed time?

Besides that, we should much injure our selves by our impatience; imbitter our present condition, increase our own burthen, dissipate our strength, retard our progress towards the perfection we profess to aim at; for *patience* must have its perfect work, that we may be perfect.

And others, that have had as clear apprehensions and vigorous desires (at least) of the future state of glory as we can (with modesty) pretend to, have yet herein moderated

fedness) this further and concluding instruction, viz.

That (however we are not to repine at our being held so long in this world in an expecting state, yet) *we let not our Souls cleave too close to their terrestrial stations, nor be too much in love with the body, and this present low state of life on earth.* 8 Rule.

For evident it is, that notwithstanding all the miseries of this expecting state, the most are yet loth to leave the world, and have hearts fordidly hankering after present things. And surely there is much difference between being *patient* of an abode on earth, and being *fond* of it. Therefore since the true blessedness of Saints consists in such things as we have shewn, and cannot be enjoy'd *till we awake*, not within the compass of time and this lower world; It will be very requisite to insist here a while in the prosecution of this last Rule. And what I shall say to it, shall be by way of

{ *Caution.*
{ *Inforcement.*

1. For *Caution*: That we misapprehend not that temper and disposition of Spirit, we are in this thing to endeavour and aim at. And it especially concerns us to be cautious about the

{ *Inducements,*
{ *Degree,*

of that desire of leaving this world, or contempt of this present life, which we either aspire to, or allow our selves in.

First, *Inducements*. Some are desirous, others at least content, to quit the world upon very insufficient, or indeed wicked considerations.

1. There are, who desire it meerly to be out of the way of present troubles, whereof they have either too impatient a sense, or an unworthy and impotent fear.

Many times the urgency and anguish of *incumbent* trouble impresses such a sense, and utters it self in such language as that, *Now, O Lord, take I beseech thee my life from me, for it is better for me to die than to live.* Or that, *My Soul chuseth strangling and death rather than life: Makes men long for death, and dig for it as for hid treasure; rejoyce and be exceeding glad when they can find the grave.*

Jonah 4.3

Job 7. 15.

*Demite
nausfragi-
um, mors
mihi munus
erit. Ovid*

Yea, and the very fear of troubles that are but *impendent* and threatning, makes some with the Grave a Sanctuary, and renders the Clods of the Valley sweet unto their thoughts. They lay possibly so humorsom and fanciful strefs upon the meer circumstances of dying, that they are earnest to *dye out of hand* to avoid *dying so and so*; as the Poet would fain perswade himself it was not *Death* he feared, but *Shipwrack*. It would not trouble them to *dye*, but to *dye by a violent hand*, or to be made a publick spectacle; they cannot endure the thoughts of *dying so*. Here is nothing commendable or worthy of a Christian in all this.

*

It

It were a piece of Christian bravery to dare to live in such a case, even when there is a visible likelihood of dying a sacrifice in the midst of flames. How much this glory was affected in the earlier days of Christianity is sufficiently known: Though, I confess, there were excesses in that kind, altogether unimitable. But if God call a man forth to be his Champion and Witness, to lay down a life, in it self little desirable; in a truly worthy cause, The call of his Providence should be as the sound of the trumpet to a truly martial Spirit; it should fill his Soul with a joyful courage and sense of honour, and be comply'd with cheerfully, with that apprehension and resentment a stout Soldier would have of his Generals putting him upon some very hazardous piece of service, viz. he would say, "*My General hath not* (as the "*Moralist expresses his sense for him*) *deserved ill of me, but it appears he judged well.* It should be counted all joy to [fall into] such trials; that is, when they become our lot by a providential disposition, not by a rash precipitation of our selves. And as it is a wickedness inconsistent with Christianity, to be of that habitual temper, to chuse to desert such a cause for the saving of life; so it is a weakness very reproachful to it, to lay down ones life in such a case with regret, as unwilling in this kind to glorifie him who laid down his for us. *We are no more to die to our selves, than to live to our selves.* Our Lord Jesus hath purchased to himself a Dominion over

*Imperator
de me non
male meru-
it, sed bene
judicavit,
Sen.
Jam. I. 24*

Rom. 14. 8.

both states, of the *living* and *dead*, and whether we live we *must live to him*, or die, we *must die to him*. 'Tis the glory of a Christian to live so much above the world, that nothing in it may make him either *fond* of life, or *weary* of it.

2. There are others who are (at least) indifferent and careless how soon they die, out of either a worse than paganish infidelity, disbelieving the concernments of another world; or a brutish stupidity, not apprehending them; or a gross conceited ignorance, misunderstanding the terms of the Gospel, and thinking themselves to be in a good condition, as to eternity, when the case is much otherwise with them.

Take heed thy willingness to die be from no such inducements, but a meer desire of being with God, and of attaining this perfection and blessedness, which he hath engaged thee in the pursuit and expectation of. And then, having made sure it be right as to the *rise* and *principle*, be careful *it be not undue in point of Degree*; i.e. a cold intermittent velleity is too little on the one hand, and a peremptory precipitant hastiness is too much on the other. The middle and desirable temper here is a *complacential submission to the Divine will in that affair*, with a *preponderating inclination on our part, towards our eternal home, if the Lord see good*. For we have two things to attend in this business, and by which our spirits may be sway'd this way or that, i.e. the *goodness of the ob-*

object to be chosen, and the will of God which must guide and over-rule our choice; the former whereof we are permitted to eye in subordination to the latter, and not otherwise.

Now our apprehension of the desirableness and intrinsic goodness of the object ought to be such, (we are Infidels else, if we have not that account of it), that nothing we can eye under the notion of a good to us, may be reckon'd so eligible as that, viz. our final and compleat Blessedness in the other world; which because we know we cannot enjoy without dying, Death also must be judged more eligible than Life, that is, Our Blessedness must be judged eligible for it self, and Death as requisite to make it present. So that the entire object we are discoursing of being present Blessedness, consider it in comparison with any thing else, that can be look'd upon by us as a good which we our selves are to enjoy, it ought to be preferr'd and chosen out of hand, in as much as nothing can be so great a present good to us, as that. And this ought to be the proper habitual inclination of our spirits, their constant frame and bent, as they respect only our interest and welfare.

But considering Gods Dominion over us, and interest in our Lives and Beings, and that as well ingenuity as necessity binds us to be subject to his pleasure, We should herein patiently suffer our selves to be over-ruled thereby, and not so abstractly mind our

In Phæd.
Vid. &
Plotin.
πσεῖ ἐξ-
αγωνίης.
Æneid. I.

own interest and contentment in this matter, as if we were altogether our own, and had no Lord over us. *Plato*, who abounds in discourses of the desirableness of dying, and of the blessed change it makes with them, that are good, yet hath this apt expression of the subjection we ought to be in to the Divine pleasure as to this matter, "That the Soul is in the Body as Soldiers in a Garrison, from whence they may not withdraw themselves without his order and direction who placed them there: And expostulates thus, "If (saith he) a Slave of yours should destroy his own Life without your consent, would you not be displeased; and "if there had been any place left for revenge, "been apt enough to that too? So he brings "in *Socrates* discoursing; and discovers himself herein to have had more Light in this matter, touching that subordinate interest only men have in their own lives, and the unlawfulness of self-murder, (as he had in other things too), than most Heathens of the more refined Sect ever arrived to.

If therefore God would give us leave to die, we should *upon our own account* be much more inclin'd to chuse it; but, while he thinks fit to have it deferr'd, should yield to his will with an unrepining submission. Only it ought not to rest at all *on our part*, or that *as to our selves* we find any thing more grateful to us in this world, that we are willing to stay a day longer in it. That *for our own sakes* we should affect a continuance here, would

would argue a terrene sordid spirit. But then such should be our dutiful filial Love to the Father of our spirits, that in pure devotedness to his Interests, we would be content to dwell (if he would have it so) a *Methuselah's* age in an earthly tabernacle for his service; that is, that we may help to preserve his memorial in a lapsed world, (overrun with Atheism and ignorance of its Maker), and win him hearts and love (to our uttermost) among his apostate disloyal creatures; and in our capacities be helpful to the encouragement of such as he continues in the world for the same purposes. This is the very temper the Apostle expresses when in that strait. Which way the poise of his own spirits inclin'd him, in the consideration of his own interest, and what was *simply more eligible to him*, he expresses with high Emphasis; *to be with Christ*, saith he, *is more, more desirable to be*, (for there are two comparatives in the Greek Text), and therefore he professes his *own desire* in order thereto, *to be dissolved*; but that *private desire* was not so *peremptory* and *absolute*, but he could make it yield and give place to his duty towards God and his Church, as it follows. So we know 'tis possible, that respects to a friend may over-sway a mans own particular inclination; and the inclination remain notwithstanding, but is subdued only; otherwise, had any reason or argument that did respect *my self* perswaded me to change it, I should then follow but my own proper inclination

Phil. i. 23.

still, and so my friend hath nothing to thank me for.

So it ought to be with us here. Our *inclination* should preponderate towards a present change of our state; only our devotedness to *his* interest and pleasure, *whose* we are, should easily over-rule it. This is the lovely temper of a gracious spirit, as to this thing, that *to die might be our choice*, and *to live in the mean time submitted to as our duty*.

As an ingenuous Son whom his Father hath employ'd abroad in a foreign Country, though duty did bind him cheerfully therein to comply with his Fathers will, and the necessity of his affairs; yet, when his Father shall signify to him, that now he understands no necessity of his longer continuance there, and therefore he may if he please return, but he shall have leave to follow his own inclination, 'Tis not hard to conjecture, that the desire of seeing a Fathers face would soon determine the choice of such a Son that way.

But how remote are the generality of them that profess themselves Gods Children from that pious ingenuity! We have taken root in the earth, and forgotten our heavenly originals and alliances. We are as *inhabitants* here, not *pilgrims*; hardly perswaded to entertain with any patience the thoughts of leaving our places on earth; which yet, do we what we can, shall shortly know us no more.

In

In short then: That vile temper of spirit, against which I professedly bend my self in the following discourse, is, when men, not out of any sense of duty towards God, or solicitude for their own Souls, but a meer fordid love to the body, and affixedness of heart to the Earth and terrene things, cannot endure the thoughts of dying. And that which I perswade to is, that having the true prospect of the future Blessedness before our eyes, and our hearts possess'd with the comfortable hope of attaining to it, we shake off our earthly inclinations, and expect with desire and joy the time of our dismissal hence, that we may enjoy it; which is the design of what was promised in the next place, viz.

2. *The Inforcement of this Instruction.* Suffer we therefore our selves to be reason'd with about this matter; and let us consider whether we can in good earnest think such an averfation, as we discover, to our blessed translation hence, an excusable, a tolerable temper; or whether it be not highly reasonable, that we should entertain the thoughts, at least, with more content and patience (if not with more fervent desire) of our departure hence and introduction into that other state.

Let me demand of thee, Dost thou thus regret the thoughts of death, as being unwilling to die at all, or as being unwilling to die as yet? Is it the thing it self, or only the circumstance of time that thou exceptest

against? 'Tis likely thou wilt say that which will seem more plausible; and so fix only on the latter; and that thou wilt not profess to desire an *eternity* on earth, but only *more time*. Well, let that for the present be supposed, as it is a more *modest*, so to be a *true* account of thy desires: Yet what is the reason of this moderation with thee herein; and that thou so limittest thy self? Is it that thou believest the Blessedness of the other state will prove better than any thing thou canst enjoy here; and that thou art not willing eternally to be deprived of? But dost thou not think it is *now* better also? And what canst thou pretend, why what is *now* the best and most desirable good, should not be *now* chosen and desired out of hand? Or is it that thou thinkest it unbecomes thee to cross the supreme will of him that made thee, who hath determined, *that all men once shall die*? And then, how knowest thou but he hath also determined concerning thee, that thou shalt die the next day or hour? and 'tis only a *present willingness to die, in subordination to the Divine Will*; or upon *supposition of it*, thou art persuaded to. Why, art thou not afraid, lest *thy present unwillingness* should cross *his present will*? Dost thou not think that Sovereign power is as sufficient to determine of the circumstance, as the thing it self? And art thou not ashamed to pretend an agreement with God about the *thing it self*, and yet differ with him about a *circumstance*?

circumstance? Shall that be a ground of quarrel between him and thee?

But while thou only professest that more modest desire of *more time* in the world, what security canst thou give, that when that desire hath been liberally gratified, it shall be at length laid down, and tumultuate no more? What bounds wilt thou fix to it, which thou darest undertake it shall not pass? Art thou sure, when thou shalt have lain at the Worlds Breast ten or twenty years longer, thou wilt then imagine thy self to have drawn it dry; or that then thou shalt begin to nauseate the World and wish for Heaven? Or hast thou not reason from thy former experience to suspect, that the longer thou dwellest on Earth, the more terrene thou wilt grow; and that if thou be indisposed to leave it this day or year, thou wilt be more so the next; and so thy desire become boundless and infinite, which is to desire to be here always, the thing which thou seem'dst so unwilling to own.

And if that prove at last the true state of thy case, Art thou then a Christian, or art thou a Man, that thou harbourest in thy breast so irreligious and irrational, yea, so fordid a wish?

What, wish eternally to be affixt to a Clod of Earth? Is that at length become thy God? Or wilt thou say, he is thy God whom thou never desires to enjoy? Or that thou hast already enough of him, but not of the world, and yet that he is thy God? Or would thou
over-

over-turn the Laws of Nature, and subvert the most Sacred Divine Constitutions, abortive the designs of Eternal Wisdom and Love, evacuate and nullifie the great Achievements of thy merciful and mighty Redeemer, only to gratifie a Sensual Bruitish Humour?

But evident it is, thou dost only in vain disquiet thy self, thou canst not disturb the settled order of things. Eternal Laws are not repealable by a fond wish. Thou set'st that dreadful thing, *Death*, at nothing the further distance, by thine abhorrency of it. It will overtake thee whether thou wilt or no; and methinks thine own reason should instruct thee to attemper and form thy self to what thou canst not avoid, and possess thee with such thoughts and desires as those of that discreet Pagan, "Lead me, O God, (saith "he) whither thou wilt, and I will follow "thee willingly; but if I be rebellious and "refuse, I shall follow thee notwithstanding. What we cannot decline, 'tis better to bear willingly, than with a regret, that shall be both *vain* and *afflictive*."

Epictet.

And what hast thou hitherto met with in the world, that should so highly endear it to thee? Examine and search more narrowly into thy earthly comforts; what is there in them to make them self-desirable, or to be so for their *own sakes*? What is it to have thy flesh indulged and pleased? to have thy sense gratified? thy phansie tickled? What so great good, worthy of an immortal reasonable

sonable spirit, canst thou find in Meats and Drinks, in full Barns and Coffers, in vulgar Fame and Applause, that should render these things desirable for themselves?

And if there were any real felicity in these things *for the present*, whil't thou art permitted to enjoy them, yet dost thou not know, that what thou enjoyest to day thou may't lose to morrow, and that such other unthought-of evils may befall thee, as may infuse a bitterness into all thou enjoyest, which causes immediately the *enjoyment* to cease, while the *things themselves* remain, and will be equal to a total loss of all?

And thus (as the Moralist ingenuously Sen. de
rev. vit. speaks) "thou wilt continually need another happiness to defend the former, and new wishes must still be made on the behalf of those which have already succeeded."

But canst thou indeed think it worth the while, that the Maker of the Universe should create a soul, and send it down into the world on purpose to superintend these trivial affairs, to keep alive a silly piece of well-figured earth while it eats and drinks, to move it to and fro in chase of shadows, to hold it up while others bow the knee and do it homage, if it had not some higher work to mind in reference to another state? Art thou contented to live long in the world to such purposes? What low worthless spirit is this, that had rather be so employ'd than in the visions of his Makers face; that chuses thus

thus to entertain it self *on earth*, rather than partake the effusions of Divine glory *above*; *that had rather creep with Worms than soar with Angels: associate with Bruits than with the Spirits of just men made perfect?* Who can solve the *Phænomenon*, or give a rational account why there should be such a Creature as man upon the Earth, abstracting from the hopes of another world? Who can think it the effect of an infinite wisdom; or account it a more worthy design, than the representing of such a Scene of actions and affairs by Puppets on a Stage? For my part, upon the strictest enquiry, I see nothing *in the life of man upon earth*, that should render it, *for it self*, more the matter of a rational election (supposing the free option given him in the first moment of his being) than presently again to cease to be the next moment.

Yea, and is there not enough obvious in every mans experience, to incline him rather to the contrary choice; and supposing a future Blessedness in another World, to make him passionately desirous (with submission to the Divine pleasure) of a speedy dismissal into it? Do not the burthens that press us *in this earthly tabernacle* teach our very sense, and urge oppressed natures into involuntary groans, while as yet our *consideration* doth not intervene? And if we do *consider*, Is not every *thought* a *sting*, making a much deeper impression than what only toucheth our flesh and bones? Who can reflect
upon

upon his present state and not presently be in pangs? The troubles that follow *humanity* are many and great, those that follow *Christianity* more numerous and grievous. The sickness, pains, losses, disappointments, and whatsoever afflictions that are in the Apostles language, *humane*, or *common to men*, (as are all the external sufferings of Christians, in *nature* and *kind*, though they are liable to them upon an account peculiar to themselves, which there the Apostle intimates), are none of our greatest evils; yet even upon the account of them, have we any reason to be so much in love with so unkind a world? Is it not strange, our very *Bridewell* should be such a *Heaven* to us? But these things are little considerable in comparison of the more spiritual grievances of Christians, as such; that is, those that afflict our Souls while we are (under the conduct of Christ) designing for a blessed eternity; if we indeed make that our business, and do seriously intend our spirits in order thereto. The darkness of our beclouded minds! The glimmering ineffectual apprehension we have of the most important things! The inconsistency of our shattered thoughts, when we would apply them to spiritual Objects! The great difficulty of working off an ill frame of heart, and the no less difficulty of retaining a good! Our being so frequently tost as between Heaven and Hell; when we sometimes think ourselves to have even attained and hope to descend

I Cor. 10.
13.

scend no more, and are all on a sudden
 plung'd in the Ditch, so as that our own
 Cloaths might abhor us; fall so low into an
 earthly temper, that we can like nothing
 Heavenly or Divine, and because we cannot,
 are enforced justly most of all to dislike our
 selves! Are these things little with us? How
 can we forbear to cry out of the depths, to
 the Father of our spirits, that he would pity
 and relieve his own Off-spring? Yea, are
 we not weary of our crying; and yet more
 weary of holding in? How do repell'd
 temptations return again, and vanquished
 corruptions recover strength? We know not
 when our work is done. We are miserable
 that we need to be always watching, and
 more miserable that we cannot watch, but
 are so often surprized and overcome of evil.
 We say sometimes with our selves, we will
 seek relief in retirement, but we cannot
 retire from our selves; or in converse with
 Godly friends, but they sometimes prove
 snares to us and we to them, or we hear
 but our own miseries repeated in their com-
 plaints. Would we pray? How faint is the
 breath we utter? How long is it e're we
 can get our Souls possess'd with any becoming
 apprehensions of God, or lively sense of our
 own concernments? Would we meditate?
 We sometimes go about to compose our
 thoughts, but we may as well assay to hold
 the Winds in our Fist. If we venture forth
 into the world, how do our Senses betray
 us? How are we mock'd with their impo-
 * stures?

tures? Their *nearer* objects become with us the only realities, and eternal things are all vanish'd into airy shadows. *Reason* and *Faith* are laid asleep, and our *Sense* dictates to us what we are to believe and do, as if it were our only Guide and Lord. And what are we not yet weary? Is it reasonable to continue in this State of *our own choice*? Is misery become so *natural* to us, so much our element that we cannot affect to live out of it? Is the darkness and dirt of a Dungeon more grateful to us than a free open Air and Sun? Is this Flesh of ours so lovely a thing, that we had rather suffer so many deaths in it, than one in putting it off and mortality with it? While we carry it about us, our Souls impart a kind of life to it, and it gives them death in exchange. Why do we not cry out more feelingly, *O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of death*? Is it not grievous to us to have so cumbersome a yoke-fellow, to be tied (as *Mezentius* is said to have done) the living and the dead together.

Do we not find the Distempers of our Spirits are mostly from these Bodies we are so in love with, either as the proper Springs or as the occasion of them. From what cause is our drowsie sloth, our eager passions, our aversion to spiritual objects, but from this impure Flesh; or what else is the subject about which our vexatious cares, or torturing fears, our bitter griefs are taken up day by day?

And

And why do we not consider, that 'tis only our love to it that gives strength and vigor to the most of our temptations, as wherein it is more immediately concern'd, and which makes them so often victorious, and thence to become our after-afflictions. He that hath learn'd to mortifie the inordinate love of the Body, will he make it the business of his life to purvey for it? Will he offer violence to his own Soul, to secure it from violence? Will he comply with mens lusts and humors for its advantage and accommodation; or yield himself to the tyranny of his own *avarice* for its *future*, or of his *more sensual lusts* for its *present* content? Will it not rather be pleasing to him, that his outward man be expos'd to perish, while his inward man is renewed day by day? He to whom the thoughts are grateful of laying it down, will not (though he neglect not duty towards it) spend his days in its continual service, and make his Soul an Hell by a continual provision for the flesh and the lusts of it. That is cruel love that shall enslave a man, and subject him to so vile and ignoble a servitude. And it discovers a sordid temper to be so imposed upon. How low are our spirits sunk, that we disdain not so base a vassalage! God and nature have oblig'd us to live in Bodies for a time, but they have not oblig'd us to measure our selves by them, to confine our desires and designs to their compass, to look no further than their concernments, to entertain no previous joys

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in

ted themselves so, as to intend their present work with composed spirits. Take that one instance of the blessed Apostle, *who, whilest in this earthly tabernacle he groaned, being burthen'd to be cloth'd with glory, and to have mortality swallowed up of life*, being sensible enough, that *during his abode or presence in the body, he was absent from the Lord*; yet notwithstanding the fervor and vehemency of these longings, with the greatest calmness and resignation imaginable, (as to the termination or continuance of his present state), he adds, that (*though he had rather be absent from the body, to be present with the Lord*) ^{2 Cor. 5.28} *it was yet his chief ambition* (as the word he ^{φλωτίζω} uses signifies) *whether present or absent* (as if ^{ἐκκεῖθεν} in comparison of that, to be present or absent were indifferent, though otherwise out of that comparison, he had told us, he would be absent rather) ^{ἐκκεῖθεν} to be *accepted*, to appear grateful and well-pleasing in the eye of God; such that he might delight and take content in, (as his expression imports). As if he had said, though I am not unapprehensive of the state of my case, I know well, I am kept out of a far more desirable condition, while I remain in this tabernacle; yet, may I but please and appear acceptable in the sight of God, whether I be sooner dismiss'd from this thralldom, or longer continued in it, I contend not. His burden here, that so sensibly prest him, was not a *present evil* so much as an *absent good*. He was not so burthen'd by *what he felt* and *could not remove*, as by

Phil. i. 23.

what he saw and could not enjoy. His groans accordingly were not *brutal*, as those of a beast under a too heavy load; but *rational*, the groans of an apprehensive spirit panting after an alluring inviting glory, which he had got the prospect of, but could not yet attain. And hence the same spiritual reason which did *exercise*, did also, at once, *moderate* his desires; so that, as he saw there was reason to desire, so he saw there was reason his desires should be allay'd by a submissive ingenuous patience, till they might have a due and seasonable accomplishment. And that same temper of mind we find in him, when he professes to be in a *strait between two*, *having a desire to be dissolved, and to be with Christ*, which he thought to be far better, and yet apprehended his longer abode in the world to be needful for the-service of the Church; whereupon he expresses his confidence, *that he should abide longer*, and therein discovers how well contented he was, it should be so.

Therefore, as in reference to *this very expectation it self*, there is great need of *patience*; so the *exercise* of it in this case hath nothing harsh or unreasonable in it, or which the spirit of a Saint may not well comport with.

2.

And for the *exercise* of *Patience* upon the latter account; the *concomitant miseries* of *this our present expecting state*: I need not insist to shew how needful it is, this being that which our own sense will sufficiently instruct us

us in. We are not to expect the future state of Blessedness in a state of present ease and rest, in a quiet friendly world, in a calm and peaceful region, under placid and benign influences from men and times; but amidst storms, and tempests, and troubles on every side, under frowns and displeasures, threats and dangers, harsh and rough severities, ill and ungentle usages, flouts and scorns, wrongs and injurious dealings, wants and pressures in many kinds. When the *world is once forsaken* by us, it grows angry; if we disclaim it, and avow our selves not to be of it, become confessed strangers and pilgrims in it, set our selves seriously and visibly to mind and design something above and beyond it, discover our selves to be of them that are *called out of it*, from the same principle that it *loves its own*, it will *hate us*; when once *God calls us his sons*, the *world will not know us*. Wee see in this context we are discoursing from, what the Psalmists condition was, whilst as yet he remained under this blessed expectation; he found *the men of time*, whose *portion was in this life*, to be deadly enemies, wicked oppressors, proud insulters; they were to him as greedy lions, as a blood-thirsty sword. His cries to be delivered from them, shew what he *met* with at their hands, or thought he had reason to *fear*. Nor can so raging enmity and hate ever cease to meditate mischiefs and cruelties. The same principle still remains in all the Serpents brood, and will still be putting

Joh. 3. 1.

forth it self in suitable practices, which cannot but infer to the contrary *Seed* continual trouble and matter of complaint.

Col. 1. 11.

And (in short) whatever is here the matter of your complaint, ought to be the matter of your patience. Whence it cannot be doubted the matter of it will be very copious; so as to require the [*all*] of patience (as the Apostle speaks); which his addressing this solemn request to God on the behalf of these *Colossian* Christians plainly intimates. He prays that *they may be strengthened with all might according to the glorious power of God unto [all] patience, &c.* Patience is the Christians *suffering power*, 'tis *Passive fortitude*, an *ability to suffer*; and so apprehensive he is of their great need of a full and ample supply of this *power*, that he prays that they might be strengthened in this kind with *might*, with *all might*, that they might be even *almighty sufferers*; strengthened with a *might according* and corresponding to the *glorious power of God himself*; Such as might appear the proper impress and image of *Divine power*, whereof the divine power might be both the *principle* and the *pattern* (for the patience whereby God bears the wrongs done to him is called power too; *Let the power of the Lord be great as thou hast spoken, saying, the Lord is long-suffering, forgiving, &c.*) And this [*unto all patience*], where *patience* is put for an *act of this power*, or must be understood of patience in exercise, *actual bearing*.

Nor are we to look upon the expressions
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of this prayer as so many hyperbolical strains, or Rhetorical schemes of Speech. He prays according to the apprehension he had of the necessity of suffering Christians.

And yet how much soever the *need* is, the *reason* is not less, 'Tis a thing as *possible* as it is *necessary*; yea, there is more in the power of the *cause*, than to work this single *effect*. I mean it not only of the efficient cause mentioned before, but of the objective or final (as having such a superabundant sufficiency in its kind also) hinted in the close of the following verse. He doth not utter vain and groundless wishes, when he prays, that to that *all of patience they might add joyfulness* too, and *giving of thanks*; no, the matter (as if he had said) will bear it, even the inheritance of the Saints in light (the very expectation *objective*, I am speaking of). It hath enough in it to induce, not only *patience*, but *joy*, not a contented *bearing* only, but *giving of thanks* too, to him that hath made you meet for that inheritance.

Ver. 12.

True it is indeed, that the very need we have of patience, and the gain that would accrue by it, is it self a reason, why we should labour to frame our spirits to it; for if such evils must be undergone, how much better is it to bear *them alone*, than to have the disease of a wounded impatient spirit, to bear also as an additional burthen. *The Law of patience* is certainly a most indulgent merciful Law, a gracious provision (as much as can be made by a Law) for the quiet and

The Blessedness of the Righteous.

ease of our spirits, under the sharpest and most afflictive sufferings. As might at large be shewn, were it suitable to fall into a discourse of *Patience* in it self considered; and to treat of that rest and pleasure, that liberty of spirit, that possession and dominion of ones own Soul, which it carries in it: But that were too much a digression. It only falls directly here in our way to consider, That as we have many grievances and pressures to undergo, while we are expecting the future Blessedness, which render the exercise of *patience* very requisite, so that there is enough of weight and worth in *that very expectation*, (*i. e.* in what we expect) to outweigh them all, and to render the exercise thereof highly reasonable upon that account. *I reckon* (saith the Apostle) *that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us.* Thus (saith he) *I reckon, i. e.* it is my stated settled judgment, not a sudden rash thought. When I have reason'd the matter with my self, weigh'd it well, consider'd the case, turn'd it round, view'd it exactly on every side, ballanc'd advantages and disadvantages, ponder'd all things which are fit to come into consideration about it, *this is the result*, the final determination, that which I conclude and judg at last, (judgment is the last product and issue of the most exquisite enquiry and debate, the ultimate and most perfect act of reason), *That the sufferings of this now of time are of no value; things*
not

Rom. 8. 18

not fit, as it were, to be mentioned the same day with the glory to be revealed, &c. It can therefore be no *hard Law*, no unreasonable imposition, that shall oblige us to the exercise of *patience*, under such sufferings, in the expectation of so transcendent glory. For, consider,

First, These sufferings are but from men, (for the sufferings of which the Apostle here speaks, are such as wherein we suffer together with Christ, *i. e.* for his Name and Interest, on behalf of the Christian cause): But this glory is from God. How disproportionable must the effects be of a created and increated cause.

Again, These sufferings reach no further than the bone and flesh, (*Fear not them that kill the body, and after they have done that, can do no more, &c.*) But this glory reaches unto, and transforms the Soul. How little can a clod of earth suffer, in comparison of what an immortal spirit may enjoy?

And further, There is much mixture in our present sufferings: the present state of suffering *Saints* is not a state of *total misery*; there are, as it were, Rays of Glory interlac'd with their present afflictions: But there will be nothing of Affliction mingled with their future Glory.

Yea, and (what may not only convince, but even transport us too), These sufferings are but *temporary*, (nay, but *momentary*), This glory *eternal*. What heart is big enough to comprehend the full sense of these words,

Our

² Cor. 4.
17.

2 Cor. 4.
17.

Our light affliction which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. How might I dwell here upon every syllable, light affliction, weighty glory, [exceeding weight], affliction for a moment, eternal weight of glory!

O then, How unworthy is it of the Christian name and hopes, that we should have an impatient resentment of this Method God follows with us, (as he did with our great Redeemer and Lord), that we should suffer first, and then enter into glory ! Heaven were a poor Heaven, if it would not make us favers. It were high time for us to give over the Christian profession, if we do not really account, that its reward and hope do surmount its reproach and trouble ; or do think its Cross more weighty than its Crown. Is the price and worth of eternal glory fall'n ? It hath been counted worth suffering for. There have been those in the world that would not accept deliverance from these sufferings, *that they might obtain the better resurrection.* Are we grown wiser ? Or would we indeed wish God should turn the Tables, and assign us our good things here, and hereafter evil things ? Ungrateful Souls ! How severe should we be to our selves ? That we should be so apt to *complain* for what we should *admire* and give thanks ! What, because purer and more refined Christianity in our time and in this part of the world hath had publick favour and countenance, can we therefore not tell how to frame our minds
to

to the thoughts of sufferings? Are *Tribulation* and *Patience* antiquated names, quite out of date and use with us, and more ungrateful to our ears and hearts, than heaven and eternal glory are acceptable? And had we rather (if we were in danger of suffering on the Christian account) run a hazard as to the *latter*, than adventure on the *former*? Or do we think it impossible we should ever come to the trial, or be concern'd to busie our selves with such thoughts? Is the world become so stable and so unacquainted with vicissitudes, that a state of things less favourable to our profession can never revolve upon us? It were, however, not unuseful to put such a case by way of supposition to our selves. For every sincere Christian is in affection and preparation of his mind a Martyr. He that loves not Christ better than his *own life*, cannot be his Disciple. We should at least inure our thoughts more to a suffering state, that we may thence take some occasion to reflect and judg of the temper of our hearts towards the Name and Cause of Christ. 'Tis easie suffering indeed, in *Idea* and *contemplation*; but something may be collected from the *observation*, how we can relish and comport with such thoughts. 'Tis as *training* in order to *fight*; which is done often upon a very remote supposition, that such occasions may possibly fall out.

Therefore, What now do we think of it if our way into the Kingdom of God shall be through many tribulations? If, before we
be-

behold the smiles of *his* blessed face, we must be entertained with the less pleasing sight of the frowning aspect and visage of an angry world? If we first bear the image of a crucified Christ, e're we partake of the likeness of a glorious God? What, do we regret the thoughts of it? Do we account we shall be ill dealt with, and have an hard bargain of it? O how tender are we grown, in comparison of the hardness and magnanimity of Primitive Christians! we have not the *patience* to *think* of what they had the *patience* to *endure*. We should not yet forget our selves, that such a thing belongs to our profession, even in this way to testify our fidelity to Christ, and our value of the inheritance purchased by his blood, if he call us thereunto. We must know it is a thing inserted into the Religion of Christians, and (with respect to their condition in this world) made an essential thereto. He cannot be a Christian, that doth not *deny himself and take up the Cross*. How often, when the active part of a Christians duty is spoken of, is the passive part studiously and expressly annexed? *Let us run [with patience] the race that is set before us*. The good ground brought forth *fruit [with patience], eternal life is for them that by [a patient] continuance in well-doing seek after it*. Yea, and hence the Word of Christ is called *the Word of his [patience]*. And the stile wherein the beloved Disciple speaks of himself, and his profession is this, *I John, a companion in tribulation and in the King-*

Heb. 12. 1.

Matt. 17.

Rom. 2.

Rev. 3.

Chap. 1.

Kingdom and [patience] of Jesus Christ. Do we mean to plead prescription against all this? Or have we got an express exemption? Have we a discharge to shew, a manumission from all the suffering part of a Christians duty? and is it not a discharge also from being Christians as much? Will we disavow our selves to belong to that noble Society of them that through Faith and Patience inherit the Promises? Surely we are highly conceited of our selves, if we think we are too good to be numbred among them of whom the *world was not worthy*. Or we design to our selves a long abode here, while we so much value the worlds favour, and a freedom from worldly trouble: Or eternity is with us an empty sound, and the future Blessedness of Saints an airy thing, that we should reckon it insufficient to counterpoise the sufferings of a few hasty days that will so soon have an end. 'Tis a sad Symptom of the declining state of Religion, when the powers of the world to come are so over-mastered by the powers of this present world, and objects of Sense so much out-weigh those of Faith. And is not this apparently the case with the Christians of the present age? Do not your thoughts run the same course with theirs, that meditated nothing but sitting on the right and left hand of Christ, in an earthly dominion, while they never dream't of drinking of his Cup, or being baptised with his Baptism? How many vain dreamers have we of golden mountains, and (I know not what) earthly

ly felicity; whose pretended Prophecies about a (supposed) near approaching prosperity to the Church on earth, gain easier belief, or are more savoury and taking with too many, than all that the Sacred Oracles discover about its glorious state in Heaven? Hence are our shoulders so unfitted to Christs yoke (like the unaccustomed Heifer), and the business of suffering will not enter into our hearts. Methinks the belief and expectation of such a state hereafter, should make us even regardless of what we see or suffer here; and render the good or evil things of time as indifferent to us. Yet neither plead I for an absolute Stoical *Apathy*, but for *Patience*. A great follower of that Sect acknowledges, "It is not a vertue to *bear* what we *feel* not, "or have no sense of. Stupidity under Providence is not a Christian temper; as that Moralist says of the wise man, "'Tis not "the hardness of stone or iron that is to be "ascribed to him.

But lest any should run into that more dangerous mistake, to think, that by the *patience* we have been all this while perswading to (in the expectation of the blessedness yet to come) is meant a *love of this present world*, and a complacential adherence of heart to the earth, (which extream the terrene temper of many Souls may much incline them to); It will be necessary upon that account to add (in reference also to the yet future expected season of this blessedness

Sen. de
Constant.
sapiētis.

in the hope of being one day delivered from them. No such hard Law is laid upon us. But how apt are we to become herein a most oppressive Law to our selves; and not only to lodg in filthy earthen-Cottages, but to love them and confine our selves to them, loth so much as to peep out. 'Tis the apt expression of a Philosopher, upbraiding that base low temper, "The degenerous Soul
 "(saith he) buried in the Body, is as a
 "slothful creeping thing, that loves its hole
 "and is loth to come forth.

Ἡ δὲ δε-
 λή ψυχὴ
 κατορω-
 ρυγμένη
 ἐν σώματι,
 ὡς ἔσ-
 Diff. 41.

πείλον νωθεῖς εἰς φωλεὶν, φιλεῖ τὸν φωλεὶν, &c. Max. Tyr

And methinks, if we have no love for our better and more noble self, we should not be altogether unapprehensive of an obligation upon us, to express a dutiful love to the Author of our beings; doth it consist with the love we owe to him, to desire always to lurk in the dark, and never come into his blessed presence? Is that our love, that we never care to come nigh him? Do we not know, that while we are present in the body,
we are absent from the Lord? Should we not therefore be willing rather to be present with the Lord, and be absent from the body? Should we not put on a confidence, an holy fortitude, (as 'tis there exprest, *we are confident*, or of good courage, and thence, *willing*, &c.) that might carry us through the Grave to him. As is the brave Speech of that last mentioned Philosopher, "God

2 Cor. 5.
 6,8.

K k

will

Δειλὸς
ἁδύρεται,
&c. Item.
diff. 1.

"will call thee e're long, expect his call.
"Old age will come upon thee, and shew thee
"the way thither; and death, which he that is
"possest with a base fear laments and dreads as
"it draws on, but he that is a *lover of God* ex-
"pects it with joy, and with courage meets it
"when it comes.

Cant. 8.

Is our love to God so faint and weak, that
it dares not encounter Death, nor venture up-
on the imaginary terrors of the Grave to go
to him? How unsuitable is this to the cha-
racter which is given of a Saints love? And
how expressly are we told, That he who
loves his life better than Christ, or that even
hates it not for his sake, (as certainly he can-
not be said to do, that is not willing to part
with it to enjoy him), cannot be his Dis-
ciple? If our love to God be not *supreme*,
'tis *none*, or not such as can denominate us
lovers of him; and will we pretend to be so,
when we love a putrid flesh and this base earth
better than him? And have we not professed-
ly, as a fruit of our avowed love to him,
surrendred our selves? Are we not his de-
voted ones? Will we be his, and yet our
own? Or pretend our selves dedicated to his
holy pleasure, and will yet be at our own
dispose, and so dispose of our selves too, as
that we may be most ungrateful to him, and
most incapable of converse with him? How
doth this love of a perishing life and of a
little animated clay stop all the effusions of
the love of God, suspend its sweet and plea-
sant fruits, which should be always exerting
them-

themselves towards him? Where is their love, obedience, joy, and praise, who are through the fear of death all their lives subject to bondage, and kept under a continual dismal expectation of an unavoidable dissolution? But must the great God lose his due acknowledgments because he will not understand wherein he deals well with us? Is his mercy therefore no mercy? As we cannot nullifie his truth by our *unbelief*, so nor his goodness by our *disesteem*. But yet consider, doth it not better become thee to be grateful than repine that God will one day unbind thy Soul and set thee free, knock off thy fetters and deliver thee out of the house of thy bondage; Couldst thou upon deliberate thoughts judg it tolerable, should he doom thee to this earth for ever? *He hath however judged otherwise*, (as the Pagan Emperor and Philosopher excellently speaks), *who is the Author both of the first composition of thy present being, and now of the dissolution of it; thou wert the cause of neither, therefore depart and be thankful, for he that dismisseth thee dealeth kindly with thee*. If yet thou understandest it not, yet remember, It is thy Father that disposes thus of thee; How unworthy is it to distrust his love? What child would be afraid to compose it self to sleep in the Parents bosom? It expresses nothing of the duty and ingenuity, but much of the frowardness and folly of a child. They sometimes cry vehemently in the undressing; but should their cries be regarded by the most indulgent Parent?

M. Aurel.
Ant. de
vit. sua
l. 12.
ἐπιθε-
λεως ὁ
ἐπολύων
λεως.

rent? Or are they fit to be imitated by us?

We have no excuse for this our forwardness. The blessed God hath told us his gracious purposes concerning us, and we are capable of understanding him. What if he had totally hidden from us our future state; and that we knew nothing, but of going into an eternal silent darkness? The Authority of a Creator ought to have awed us into a silent submission. But when we are told of such a glory, that 'tis but drawing aside the fleshly vail and we presently behold it, methinks the blessed hour should be expected not with patience only, but with ravishing joy.

Did we hear of a Country in this world, where we might live in continual felicity, without toil, or sickness, or grief, or fear, who would not wish to be there, though the passage were troublesome? Have we not heard enough of Heaven to allure us thither? Or is the *eternal truth* of suspected credit with us? Are Gods own reports of the future glory unworthy our belief or regard?

How many, upon the credit of his word, are gone already triumphantly into glory? *That only seeing the promises afar off, were perswaded of them, and embraced them*; and never afterwards owned themselves under any other notion than of *Pilgrims on earth*, longing to be at home in their most desirable *heavenly Country*. We are not the first that are to open Heaven; the main Body of Saints is already there;

Heb. 11.
13, 16.

there; 'tis in comparison of their number, but a scattering remnant that are now alive upon the earth. How should we long to be associated to that glorious Assembly? Methinks we should much more regret our being so long left behind.

But if we should desire still to be so, why may not all others as well as we, and as much expect to be gratified as we? And then we should agree in desiring, that our Redeemers triumph might be defer'd, that his Body might yet remain incompleat, that he might still be debar'd of the long expected fruit of the travel of his Soul, that the name of God might be still subjected to the blasphemy and reproach of an Atheistical world, who have long ago said with derision, Where is the promise of his coming? Would we have all his Designs to be still unfinish'd, and so mighty wheels stand still for us, while we sport our selves in the dust of the earth, and indulge our sensual inclination, which sure this bold desire must argue to be very predominant in us; and take heed it argue not its habitual prevalence.

At least, if it discover not our present *sensuality*, it discovers our former *sloth* and *idleness*. It may be we may excuse our averness to dye by our unpreparedness, that is, one fault with another, (though that be besides the case I am speaking of). What then have we been doing all this while? What, were the affairs of thy Soul not thought of till

Sen.

now? Take then thy reproof from a Hea-
 then, that it may convince thee the more,
 “No one, saith he, divides away his money
 “from himself, but yet men divide away
 “their very life—But doth it not shame thee
 “(he after adds) to reserve only the relicks
 “of thy life to thy self, and to devote that
 “time only to a good mind which thou
 “canst employ upon no other thing? How
 “late is it to begin to live when we should
 “make an end; and defer all good thoughts
 “to such an age as possibly few do ever reach
 “to. The truth is (as he speaks) we have
 “not little time but we lose much, we have
 “time enough were it well employ’d, there-
 “fore we cannot say we receive a short life,
 “but we make it so, we are not indigent of
 “time but prodigal: What a pretty contra-
 “diction is it to complain of the shortness of
 “time, and yet do what we can to precipi-
 “tate its course; to hasten it by that we
 “call pastime? If it have been so with thee,
 “art thou to be trusted with more time?

But as thy case is, I cannot wonder that
 the thoughts of death be most unwelcome
 to thee; who art thou that thou should’st
 desire the day of the Lord? I can only say
 to thee, *hasten thy preparation*, have recourse
 to *Rule* 2d, and 3d, and accordingly guide
 thy self till thou find thy spirit made more
 suitable to this Blessedness; that it become
 savoury and grateful to thy Soul, and thy
 heart be set upon it. Hence thou may’st be
 reconciled to the Grave, and the thoughts
 of

of Death may cease to be a terror to thee.

And when thou art attained so far, consider thy great advantage in being willing and desirous to die upon this further account, That thy desire shall now be pitch'd upon a thing so certain. Thine other desires have met with many a disappointment. Thou hast set thy heart upon other things, and they have deceived thy most earnest thirsty expectations. Death will not do so. Thou wilt now have one certain hope; one thing in reference whereto thou may'st say, *I am sure*. Wait a while, this peaceful sleep will shortly seize thy Body and awaken thy Soul. It will calmly period all thy troubles, and bring thee to a blessed rest.

But now, if only the meer terror and gloominess of dying, trouble thy thoughts, this of all other seems the most inconsiderable pretence against a willing surrender of our selves to death. *Reason* hath overcome it, *natural courage*, yea, some mens *Atheism*, shall not *Faith*? Are we not ashamed to consider, what confidence and desire of death some Heathens have exprest? Some that have had no preapprehension or belief of another state (though there were very few of them), and so no hope of a consequent Blessedness to relieve them, have yet thought it unreasonable to disgust the thoughts of death. What wouldst thou think if thou hadst nothing but the Sophisms of such to oppose to all thy dismal thoughts? I have met with
*one arguing thus,—“Death which is ac-

* Epicurus in Gassend. Synt.

“counted the most dreadful of all evils, is
 “nothing to us (saith he) because while
 “we are, in being Death is not yet present,
 “and when Death is present we are not in
 “being; so that it neither concerns us, as
 “living, nor dead; for while we are alive
 “it hath not toucht us, when we are dead
 “we are not.—Moreover (saith he) the ex-
 “quisite knowledg of this, that Death be-
 “longs not to us, makes us enjoy this mor-
 “tal life with comfort; not by adding any
 “thing to our uncertain time, but by taking
 “away the desire of immortality. Shall they
 comfort themselves upon so wretched a
 ground, with a little Sophistry, and the hope
 of extinguishing all desire of immortality;
 and shall not we, by cherishing this blessed hope
 of enjoying shortly an immortal glory?

* Plato in
 Phedone,
 From
 whom I
 adjoin
 what (to
 them that
 under-
 stand it)
 is more
 elegant in
 his own
 language,
 ὁ δὲ τοῦ
 γανασσέν-
 τα μέλ-
 λοντα ἀπο-
 θανέσθαι
 ἐκ αὐτῶν
 σοφὸς ἀλλὰ
 τίς φιλο-
 σόματος.
 Ibid.
 Ἀρχαίαν
 ἐρωτῶν.

Others of them have spoken magnificently
 of a certain contempt of this bodily life, and
 a not only *not fearing* but *desiring to dye*, up-
 on a fixed apprehension of the distinct and
 purer and immortal nature of the Soul, and
 the preconceived hope of a consequent felicity.
 I shall set down some of their words, added
 to what have been occasionally mentioned,
 (amongst that plentiful variety wherewith one
 might fill a Volume), purposely to shame the
 more terrene temper of many Christians.

“The Soul (saith one of them) * is an in-
 “visible thing, and is going into another
 “place, suitable to it self, that is noble, and
 “pure, and invisible, even into *Hades*, indeed
 “to the good and wise God, whither also
 “my

“my Soul shall shortly go, if he see good.
 “But this (he saith in what follows) be-
 “longs only to such a Soul as goes out of the
 “body pure, that draws nothing corporeal
 “along with it, did not willingly commu-
 “nicate with the body in life, but did even
 “fly from it, and gather up it self into it
 “self, always meditating this one thing.

“A Soul so affected, shall it not go to
 “something like it self, Divine, (and what is
 “Divine, is immortal and wise), whither
 “when it comes, it becomes blessed, free from
 “error, ignorance, fears, and wild (or enor-
 “mous) loves, and all other evils incident
 “to men.

* One writing the life of that rare person
Plotinus, says, That he seemed as if he were
 in some sort ashamed that he was in body;
 which (however it would less become a Chri-
 stian, yet) in one that knew nothing of an
incarnate Redeemer, it discovered a refined
 noble spirit.

* Porphy-
*rius. Ploti-
 nus En-
 nead. 7.
 Lib. 6.*

(whom
 though a
 just admi-
 rer of him
 because
 nothing
 profession

would fain have men reckon to have been a Christian,
 he writes much against the *Pseudo-Christian Gnosticks*,
 against Christianity, yet it appears not he ever made
 of it. *Ennead. i. lib. 7.*

The same person speaks almost the language
 of the Apostle, concerning his being rapt up
 into the third heaven, and tells of such an alie-
 nation of the soul from the Body: “*That when*
 “*once it finds God* (whom he had before been
 “speaking of under the name of the τὸ καλὸν
 “or the beauty) *shining in upon it, it now no*
longer

“longer feels its body, or takes notice of its be-
 “ing in the body, but even forgets its own
 “being, that it is a man, or a living creature,
 “or any thing else whatsoever, for it is not
 “at leisure to mind any thing else, nor doth
 “it desire to be: Yea, and having sought him
 “out, he immediately meets it, presenting it
 “self to him. It only views him instead of
 “it self,—and would not now change its state
 “for any thing, not if one could give it the
 “whole heaven in exchange.

“And elsewhere discussing, whether life in
 “the body be good and desirable, yea or no,
 “he concludes it to be good, not as it is an
 “union of the Soul and body, but as it may
 “have that vertue annexed to it, by which what
 “is really evil may be kept off. But yet, that
 “death is a greater good. That life in the bo-
 “dy is in it self evil; but the Soul is by *vertue*
 “stated in goodness; not as enlivening the bo-
 “dy with which it is compounded, but as it
 “severs and sejoins it self from it; meaning
 “so, as to have as little communion as possibly
 “it can with it. To which purpose is the ex-
 “pression of another: That the Soul of an happy
 “man so collects and gathers up it self out from
 “all things into it self, that it hath as it were
 “seperated it self from the body while it is yet
 “contained in it—And that it was posselt of
 “that fortitude, as not to dread its departure
 “from it.

Maxim. Pro-
clus.

Another gives this character of a good
 man, “That as he liv’d in simplicity, tran-
 “quility, purity, not being offended at any
 that

“that they believed him not to live so; he
 “also comes to the end of his life, pure, quiet,
 “and *easy to be dissolved*, disposing himself
 “without any constraint to his lot.

Evangel.
 M. Aur.
 Ant.

Another is brought in speaking thus, “If
 “God should grant me to become a Child a-
 “gain, to send forth my renewed infant-cries
 “from my Cradle, and having even run out
 “my race, to begin it again, I should most
 “earnestly refuse it; for what profit hath this
 “life? and how much toil?—Yet I do not
 “repent that I have lived, because I hope I
 “have not lived in vain. And now I go out
 “of this life, not as out of my dwelling-house,
 “but my Inn. O blessed day! when I shall
 “enter into that Council and Assembly of
 “Souls, and depart from this rude and dis-
 “orderly rout and crew, &c.

Cato in
 Cicerone
 de Senect.

I shall add another, (of a not much unlike
 strain * and rank, as either being not an open,
 or no constant friend to Christianity), that
 discoursing *who is the Heir of Divine things*,
 saith, “He cannot be, who is in love with
 “this animal sensitive life; but only that pu-
 “rest mind that is inspired from above, that
 “partakes of an heavenly and Divine porti-
 “on, that only despises the body, &c. with
 much more of like import.

* Philo
 Judæus.

Yea, so have some been transported with
 the *desire of immortality*, that (being wholly
 ignorant of the sin of self-murder), they
 could not forbear doing violence on them-
 selves.

Among the *Indians*, two thousand years
 ago,

Q. Curt.
 lib. 8.

ago, were a sort of wise men, as they were called that held it a reproach to die of age, or a disease, and were wont to burn themselves alive, thinking the flames were polluted if they came amidst them dead.

*Cicer.
Quæst. Tuscul.*

** Scil. Domitianus aliquoties sic dictus. Philostr. in vit. Apoll. Tyanæi.*

The story of *Cleombrotus* is famous, who hearing *Plato* discourse of the immortality of the Soul, by the Sea-side, leapt from him into the Sea, that he might presently be in that state. And 'tis storied, that ** Nero* refused to put *Apollonius* to death, though he were very much incensed against him, only upon the apprehension he had that he was very desirous to dye, because he would not so far gratifie him.

I only make this improvement of all this; Christian *Principles* and *Rules*, do neither hurry nor misguide men, but the *end* (as we have it revealed) should much more powerfully and constantly attract us. Nothing is more unsuitable to *Christianity* our way, nor to that *Blessedness* the *end* of it, than a terrene spirit. They have nothing of the true light and impress of the Gospel now, nor are they ever like to attain the-vision of the blessed face of God, and the impress of his likeness hereafter, that desire it not above all things, and are not willing to quit all things else for it.

And is it not a just exprobration of our earthliness and carnality, if meer Philosophers and Pagans should give better proof than we of a spirit erected above the world, and alienated from what is temporary and terrene? Shall their Gentilism outvie our Christianity?

Me-

Methinks a generous indignation of this reproach should inflame our Souls, and contribute somewhat to the refining of them to a better and more spiritual temper.

Now therefore, O all you that name yourselves by that worthy name of *Christians*, that profess the Religion taught by him that was not of the earth, earthly, but the Lord from heaven; You that are partakers of the heavenly calling, Consider the great Apostle and High-Priest of your profession, who only took our flesh that we might partake of his Spirit, bore our earthly that we might bear his heavenly Image, descended that he might cause us to ascend. Seriously bethink yourselves of the scope and end of his *Apostleship* and *Priesthood*. He was sent out from God to invite and conduct you to him, to bring you into the communion of his glory and blessedness. He came upon a Message and Treaty of peace. To discover his Fathers love and win yours. To let you know how kind thoughts the God of love had conceived to you-wards; and that, however you had hated him without cause, and were bent to do so without end, he was not so affected towards you. To settle a friendship, and to admit you to the participation of his eternal glory. Yea, he came to give an instance, and exemplifie to the world in his own Person, how much of heaven he could make to dwell in mortal flesh; how possible he could render it, to live in this world as unrelated to it; how gloriously the divine life could triumph

umph over all the infirmities of frail humanity. And so leave men a certain proof and pledg, to what perfections human nature should be improv'd by his grace and spirit, in all them that should resign themselves to his conduct, and follow his steps. That heaven and earth were not so far asunder, but he knew how to settle a commerce and intercourse between them. That an heavenly life was *possible* to be transacted here, and *certain* to be gloriously rewarded and perfected hereafter.

And having testifi'd these things, he seals the Testimony, and opens the way for the accomplishment of all by his death. Your heavenly *Apostle* becomes a *Priest* and a *Sacrifice* at once: That no doubt might remain among men of his sincerity, in what even dying he ceased not to profess and avow. And that by his own propitiatory blood a mutual reconciliation might be wrought between God and you; that your hearts might be won to him, and possess'd with an ingenuous shame of your ever having been his enemies. And that his displeasure might for ever cease towards you, and be turned into everlasting friendship and love. That eternal redemption being obtained, heaven might be opened to you, and you finally be received to the glory of God. Your hearts being bent thitherward and made willing to run through whatsoever difficulties of life or death to attain it. Do not think that Christ came into the world and died to procure the pardon of your sins,
and

and so translate you to heaven, while your hearts should still remain cleaving to the earth. He came and returned to prepare a way for you; and then call, not drag you thither. That by his Precepts, and Promises, and Example, and Spirit, he might form and fashion your Souls to that glorious state; and make you willing to abandon all things for it. And lo! now the God of all grace is calling you by Jesus Christ unto his eternal Glory. Direct then your eyes and hearts to that mark, *the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.*

'Tis ignominious, by the common suffrage of the civiliz'd world, not to intend the proper business of our Calling. 'Tis your Calling to forsake this world and mind the other; make haste then to quit your selves of your intanglements, of all earthly dispositions and affections. Learn to live in this world as those that are not of it, that expect every day, and wish to leave it, whose hearts are gone already.

'Tis dreadful to dye with pain and regret; To be forced out of the Body; To die a violent death, and go away with an unwilling reluctant heart. *The wicked is driven away in his wickedness.* Fain he would stay longer, but cannot. *He hath not power over the Spirit, to retain the Spirit, nor hath he power in death.* He must away whether he will or no. And indeed much against his will. So it cannot but be, where there is not a previous knowledg and love of a better state, where the Soul understands it not, and is
not

not effectually attempted and framed to it.

O get then the lovely Image of the future glory into your minds. Keep it ever before your eyes. Make it familiar to your thoughts. Imprint daily there these words, *I shall behold thy face, I shall be satisfied with thy likeness.* And see that your Souls be enricht with that *righteousness*, have inwrought into them that holy rectitude, that may dispose them to that blessed state. Then will you die with your own consent, and go away, not driven, but allur'd and drawn. You will go, as the redeemed of the Lord, with everlasting joy upon their heads. As those that know whither you go, even to a state infinitely worthy of your desires and choice, and where 'tis best for you to be. You will part with your Souls, not by a forcible separation, but a joyful surrender and resignation. They will dislodg from this earthly tabernacle, rather as *putting it off* than having it rent and torn away.

Loosen your selves from this body by degrees, as we do any thing we would remove from a place where it sticks fast. Gather up your spirits into themselves. Teach them to look upon themselves as a distinct thing. Inure them to the thoughts of a dissolution. Be continually as taking leave. Cross and disprove the common maxim, and let your hearts, which they use to say are wont to die last, die first. Prevent death, and be mortifi'd towards every earthly thing beforehand, that death may have nothing to kill but your body; and that you may not die a double death in one hour,

hour, and suffer the death of your body and of your love to it both at once. Much less that *this* should survive to your greater (and even incurable) misery.

Shake off your Bands and Fetters, the terrene affections that so closely confine you to the house of your bondage. And lift up your heads in expectation of the approaching Jubilee, the day of your redemption; when you are to go out free, and enter into the glorious liberty of the Sons of God; when you shall serve, and groan, and complain no longer. Let it be your continual song, and the matter of your daily praise, that the time of your happy deliverance is hastening on; that ere long you shall be absent from the body, and present with the Lord. That he hath not doom'd you to an everlasting imprisonment within those close and clayie walls, wherein you have been so long shut up from the beholding of his sight and glory. In the thoughts of this, while the outward man is sensibly perishing, let the inward revive and be renewed day by day. "What Prisoner would be sorry to see the walls of his Prison House (so an Hea- then speaks) mouldring down, and the hopes arriving to him of being delivered out of that darkness that had buried him, of recovering his liberty, and enjoying the free air and light. What Champion, inur'd to hardship, would stick to throw off rotten rags, and rather expose a naked, placid, free body, to naked, placid, free air? The truly generous Soul (so he a little above)

Max. Tyr.
Dissert. 41.

*

Ll

"never

“ never leaves the body against its will.

Rejoice that it is the gracious pleasure of thy good God, thou shalt not always inhabit a Dungeon, nor lie amidst so impure and disconsolate darkness; that he will shortly exchange thy filthy Garments for those of Salvation and Praise. The end approaches. As you turn over these leaves, so are your days turned over. And as you are now arrived to the end of this Book, God will shortly write *Finis* to the Book of your Life on Earth, and shew you your names written in Heaven, in the Book of that Life which shall never end.

FINIS.
